A HISTORY

OF

Hindu Civilisation during British Rule

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IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. I

RELIGIOUS CONDITION

CALCUTTA: W. NEWMAN, & Co.
LONDON: KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER, & Co.
LEIPZIG: OTTO HARRASSOWITZ.
1894

PRINTED BY JADU NATH SEAL,
HARE PRESS:
46, BECHU CHATTERJEE'S STREET, CALCUTTA.

TO

PROFESSOR F. MAX MÜLLER, K. M.,

WHO HAS NOBLY DEVOTED HIS LIFE

TO THE ELUCIDATION OF THE

ANCIENT LITERATURE AND HISTORY OF MY COUNTRY,

AND HAS AWAKENED IN MY COUNTRYMEN

A LIVING INTEREST IN THEIR PAST,

I GRATEFULLY DEDICATE THIS VOLUME.

PREFACE.

—:o:—

THE idea of writing a History of Hindu Civilisation first occurred to me sixteen years ago, when I submitted to the Oriental Congress a short essay on Aryan Civilisation in India, which earned a prize awarded by the Italian Government. The execution of the work, however, has had to be postponed from year to year for various reasons which it is needless to mention. Even now, the work is published with considerable diffidence, as, on many points, the information which I have been able to collect is meagre and unsatisfactory. I venture to hope, however, that the present publication will create interest in the subject, and thus lead eventually to a more exhaustive treatment of it.

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INTRODUCTION.

Religion, not a sure criterion of civilisation.

We propose to treat our subject under five heads—Religious Condition, Socio-Religious Condition, Social Condition, Industrial Condition, and Intellectual Condition.* As a test of civilisation, the last is the most important, and we propose to devote to it the third and fourth volumes of this work. With regard to religious condition, which forms the subject of the first Book, there is not the same accordance in the standard of religious progress as there is in that of intellectual progress. The Hindus judge of the intellectual productions of the

* Moral condition is also of the highest importance. As much of it as is capable of historical treatment will be dealt with in this Introduction and in Books II and III.

Christians by very nearly the same standard as that which the Christians apply to the intellectual productions of the Hindus. Knowledge is the common property of all peoples. There is no such thing as Christian Mathematics, Hindu Mathematics, or Mahomedan Mathematics. There is also considerable uniformity in the standard of individual morality among all civilised nations. It is otherwise with religion. The Christian, the Mahomedan, and the Hindu, each would consider his religion to be the truest, each would consider his ideal of spiritual culture to be the best; and there is no standard by which their conflicting claims could be settled. Christianity is the religion of the most advanced nations of the modern age. Yet, from one point of view, Mahomedanism may be said to be superior to Christianity; for it inculcates a purer form of monotheism. Idolatry is now held in abhorrence; it is supposed to have a demoralising and enervating effect. Yet most of the civilised nations of antiquity were idolators. The Indo-Aryans of the Vedic times were not image-worshippers; their descendants of the time of Kálidása and Varáhamihira were. The change would hardly be called progress. Yet the post-Vedic Hindus were more advanced than the Vedic Hindus in literature, science, arts and manufactures. Protestantism, is said to be

superior to Roman Catholicism. Yet, the conversion of good and intelligent Protestants to Roman Catholicism is not quite a rare occurrence. Christianity is considered superior to Buddhism, at least by Christians. Yet there are sensible Christians who profess preference for, if not actual adherence to, Buddhism.*

There *is* a plane of contact, however, where the really good and wise of nearly all religions meet. But the world knows but little of such men.† Ordinary history

* It was asserted sometime ago, that thirty thousand Parisians professed Buddhism. Buddha as a saintly prince is the chief character of a new French play, *Iseyl.* The following extracts are from a recent issue of a London newspaper:

" The Buddhist priest, Horiou-Joki, who attended the Chicago Congress, is now at work in the Musee Guimet. * * * The compassionate doctrines of the Far East find many admirers in the French capital, who belong to the cream of intellectual society. * * * M. de Rosny, Professor at the School of Oriental Languages, is perhaps the most prominent apostle of the cult.

* * * * *

Many of M. de Rosny's disciples go to church, taking with them, in lieu of a missal, books bound similarly in black morocco, filled with meditations on that suppressed egoism and exalted altruism which Buddha taught."

† Even the founders of religions and sects, who have a place in history, are not always spiritually the best men. In the East, from the time of Jesus to the present day, the founder of a religion has often been "obliged to choose between these two alternatives—either to renounce his mission, or to become a thaumaturgus." (" Life of Jesus," by E. Renan, People's Edition, London, p. 189). As Huxley has well put it.—" The practice of that which is ethically best, what we call goodness or virtue, involves a course of conduct which, in all respects, is opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence. In place

usually records and emblazons deeds which it were better for humanity to forget, and holds up as heroes men whom it were better for humanity to disown. We know but little of men who rise superior to the mere animal conditions of life, who have attained a high stage of spiritual culture. If we could know them, their comparative number and influence would have afforded us good data for ascertaining the spiritual progress of a people—no matter what their *form* of religion might be. But, from the conditions of spiritual progress such a thing is impossible.

Influence of religion upon intellectual progress, and *vice versa*.

But although religion can not be regarded as a sure criterion of civilisation, it should not be ignored in a history of civilisation. Religion *does* influence progress, though it is extremely difficult to ascertain the extent of that influence. The difficulty is so great indeed, that there are writers who have denied to religion any influence at all, except

of ruthless self-assertion, it demands self-restraint; in place of thrusting aside, or treading down, all competitors, it requires that the individual shall not merely respect, but shall help his fellows; its influence is directed, not so much to the survival of the fittest, as to the fitting of as many men as possible to survive. It repudiates the gladiatorial theory of existence." ("Evolution and Ethics," p. 33.)

in a very small way.* It is, for instance, by no means easy to tell, how far the propagation of Protestant principles can be attributed to the intellectual progress of Europe since the Reformation, and to what extent this progress itself is indebted to Protestantism; how far the development of Vedantism in the later Vedic period, was due to the remarkable intellectual progress of the Indo-Aryans of that age, and to what extent this progress was aided by Vedantism. The fact is, the factors of civilisation—religious, socio-religious, social, moral, industrial, and intellectual—act and react upon one another. The intellectual progress of a people has always a tendency to act upon their religion. When the Indo-Aryans of the later Vedic period advanced so far as to doubt the efficacy of sacrificial rites, their religion underwent an important change in the supersession of the doctrine of ceremonial observances by that of *Jnána* (knowledge of the Supreme Soul).

Causes which modify the influence of intellectual upon religious progress.

The influence of intellectual upon religious progress is, however, sometimes restricted, or even nearly neutralised, by various causes, of which the protective spirit,

* Says Buckle: "Looking at things upon a large scale, the religion of mankind is the effect of their improvement, not the cause of it."—"History of Civilisation in England," Vol. I. Chapter V.

either of a Government or of an influential class in a community, is the principal. A State religion is not easily changed, however incompatible it may be with the intellectual advancement of the people professing it. Roman Catholicism long remained the national religion of the French after the acceptance of Protestantism by peoples intellectually inferior to them, like the Swedes, and the Swiss; because Roman Catholicism was the State religion of France. The influence of intellectual progress may also be narrowed by its artificial restriction within a particular class like that of the Bráhmans. By monopolising all knowledge, they made the enlightenment which knowledge always brings with it almost their sole heritage. The great advance which they made intellectually towards the close of the Vedic period benefited the non-Bráhman castes but little. In later times, Samkaráchárya, the great Bráhman reformer of the eighth century, purposely preached pantheism for his caste and idolatry for the other castes, because these were not sufficiently advanced for the reception of a philosophic creed. Through centuries of decay and degeneration during the Mahomedan period, while the lower-caste Hindus, who were kept away from their Sástras, passed through gross forms of idol-worship, and still grosser forms of guru-worship,

the cultured Bráhmans generally remained Vedantists. But for caste which confined intellectual progress to the Bráhmans the history of Hinduism would have been different from what it has been.

What we have just said shows, that a high form of religion cannot make proper progress among a people who are not intellectually prepared for it. History furnishes us with numerous illustrations of the truth of this proposition. Buddhism as preached by Sákya-simha, and Christianity as preached by Christ, were two of the sublimest and most intellectual religions, that the world has ever seen. But Buddhism and Christianity as adopted by the mass of the people are systems of superstition as different from the Buddhism of Gautama and the Christianity of Christ, as the Hinduism of the Puránas and Tantras is different from that of the Upanishads.

Influence of religion upon Hindu civilisation.

From what we have said above, it is clear that the religion of a people is to a great extent conditioned by their intellectual state. History also shows that religion to some extent, influences social, moral, and intellectual progress. The nature and limiting conditions of this influence will be discussed hereafter. We need only observe here that as

the religion of an individual, would not be a sure indication of his intellectual development, so the religion professed by a nation would not be a sure criterion of the progress achieved by it. Nevertheless religion as a factor of progress must be taken into account in a history of the civilisation of any people, especially of a people like the Hindus, with whom the end and aim of life has ever been spiritual progress. To the Hindu, the world is illusory.* He has sought to subordinate the animal to the spiritual wants of life. He has sought happiness by self-denial rather than by self-indulgence, by curtailing the wants of life, rather than by increasing them, by suppressing desires, rather than by gratifying them, by lowering the standard of material comfort rather than by raising it. The average European cannot conceive that a people who according to his ideas, are imperfectly clad, who dwell in huts, and live upon cereals and herbs, and who support large families on what he would

* "So far as we can judge, a large class of people in India, not only the priestly class, but the nobility also, not only men but women also, never looked upon their life on earth as something real. What was real to them was the invisible, the life to come. What formed the theme of their conversations, what formed the subject of their meditations, was the real that alone lent some kind of reality to this unreal phenomenal world." (MaxMuller "Theosophy or Psychological Religion," p. 68).

probably spend on drinks alone for himself,—that such a people could ever have been civilised. *

The progress as well as the backwardness of the Hindu, his virtues as well as vices, all that is good and all that is bad in him and in his society, are in a great measure attributable to this sovereignty of religion over him. The entire literature of the Vedic period,

* Mr. Adam gives the following interesting description of the Pundits (quoted in F. W. Thomas' "History and Prospects of British Education in India," p. 8):

"I saw men not only unpretending, but plain and simple in their manners, and though seldom, if ever, offensively coarse, yet reminding me of the very humblest classes of English and Scottish peasantry; living constantly half-naked and realising in this respect the descriptions of savage life; inhabiting huts which, if we connect moral consequences with physical causes, might be supposed to have the effect of stunting the growth of their minds, or in which only the most contracted minds might be supposed to have room to dwell—and yet several of these men are adepts in the subtleties of the profoundest grammar of what is probably the most philosophical language in existence; not only practically skilled in the niceties of its usage, but also in the principles of its structure; familiar with all the varieties and applications of their national laws and literature and indulging in the abstrusest and most interesting disquisitions in logical and ethical philosophy. They are, in general, shrewd, discriminating and mild in their demeanour. The modesty of their character does not consist in abjectness to a supposed or official superior, but is equally shown to each other. I have observed some of the worthiest speak with unaffected humility of their own pretensions to learning, with admiration of the learning of a stranger and countryman who was present, with high respect of the learning of a townsman who happened to be absent, and with just praise of the learning of another townsman after he had retired, although in his presence they were silent respecting his attainments."

and the greater portion of the literature of subsequent periods are of a religious character. Hindu philosophy, in comparison with which, in the words of Schlegel, "even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans" appears "like a feeble Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory of the noonday sun faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished," had for its object the discovery of the path of salvation. Hindu grammar and Hindu mathematics which early attained a high degree of excellence, had their origin in religious needs. But, as on the one hand the Hindu mind soared to the highest flights, and grasped, some of the grandest principles ever discovered in ancient or modern times, in mental or physical science, so, on the other hand, it was imbued with superstitions which to us at least seem puerile and meaningless. Not a few of the works of the Hindus, even of the brightest periods of their civilisation, are strange compounds of the sublime and the ridiculous. Varáha Mihira was a great astronomer of the 6th century. His Brihat Samhitá is certainly a great work. But any one reading it is inclined to say of the Hindus as Alberuni said, * "I can only compare their mathematics and astronomical literature, as far as I know it, to

* Alberuni's "India," translated by E. C. Sachau, Vol. I. p. 25.

a mixture of pearl shells and sour dates, or of pearls and dung or of costly crystals and common pebbles."

Illustrations of the influence of religion upon the Hindu mind; Yogis;

From the time of the Upanishads, the aim of the Hindu has been to know the One by calm meditation undisturbed by mundane thoughts, or, in later times to be lost in ecstatic love for Him. To the practical European, a Rámkrishna* spending his whole life in meditation and dovotional exercises in calm retirement, or a Chaitanya dancing in the streets in frenzied love for his Deity, may appear as, at best, a visionary enthusiast. These "dreamers," however, have a philosophy of their own, which would make out the practical European engaged in a perpetual struggle for the betterment of his fortune as a hunter after shadows. The extent of the influence still exercised by such "dreamers" is not known. They rarely, if ever, appear in newspapers; what they do is done in silence and secrecy. We were surprised to find last year, that the Gonds† of an extensive tract in the Rewah State (Central

* *Vide* Book I. Ch. IV.

† The Gonds are an aboriginal tribe who, like most aboriginal tribes, are fond of intoxicating .

India) had given up drinking; and on enquiry we found out the reason to be the *fiat* of a Yogi who had visited the State the year before. His order had gone forth from village to village, and the Gonds without question had become total abstainers. No crusade against intemperance could have produced such a wonderful and widespread result. There are no doubt charlatans among the Yogis who live upon the credulity of ignorant people. But there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that there are also genuine men among them, men who devote their lives to spiritual culture in a manner inconceivable to the European.

employment of wealth on religious purposes;

There are, many other indications of the dominant influence of religion upon the Hindu mind. From the earliest times till very recently the chief use which a well-to-do Hindu, be he king or subject, has made of his wealth is in building temples and guest-houses, digging wells, tanks, and similar works for the public benefit. Among the ruins of Hindu cities, temples are often the only, and certainly always the most prominent features; we scarcely ever meet with the remains of palaces or other secular buildings. The major portion, if not all of the savings of the Hindu are spent upon religious purposes. No doubt, most of these purposes are what we would call supersti-

tious. But there is scarcely a religion professed by any considerable section of mankind which is altogether free from superstition. The question is only one of degree. Any how, we may condemn the superstition, but we must reverence the spiritual temperament, the temperament which places the spiritual above the animal man.

recent religious movements;

Even now after nearly a century of contact with an essentially material civilisation like the Western, the inherited spirituality of the Hindu is manifested in the recent reaction in favour of what may be called rationalistic Hinduism and other religious movements. We find educated men sitting at the feet of comparatively illiterate devotees or singing the praises of Hari in the Streets of Calcutta and other towns.

sanctity, not, wealth, honoured by the Hindus;

"I was very soon attracted," says J. Routledge, "by the fact that while wealth nearly always is the chief means of distinguishing man from man in England, it has no such exclusive power in India. There are few sights more pitiable than the devotee. His whole life is to outside beholders one of misery. But what is he honoured for? Not wealth; for he is often wretchedly poor. He is honoured for his presumed piety, for his

devotion to the Creator. He has subdued the flesh with its affections and lusts, has brought the body into subjection to the spirit; has risen above time, and lives in eternity."* The fact that men of special sanctity are still raised to the rank of Avatáras [incarnations], not only by ignorant and credulous masses, but also by men who have received the light of Western education shews the influence† which religion still exercises over the Hindu.

Hindu religious life never quite dormant.

The religious life of the Hindus has never been quite dormant. There has been decay since the Mahomedan conquest, but not death; there has been an increase of feebleness, but not prostration. Few if any of the Bráhmanas, let alone the other twice-born castes, now go through the four stages of life prescribed in the Manusamhitá and other works of antiquity. The doctrine of Bhakti (Faith) now rules the Hindu to the almost utter exclusion of the higher and more intellectual doctrine of Jnána (knowledge of the Supreme Soul).

But, the Mahomedan period was not quite the period of darkness and degeneration which it is usually repre-

* Routledge's "English Rule and Native Opinion in India," 1878, p. 275.

† Amongst other indications of this influence may be mentioned the immense success of plays like *Chaitanya Charit* and *Prahlád Charit* which deal with religious subjects.

sented to have been: the age which produced Rámánanda, Kabir, Nának and Chaitanya can not well be considered as such. They all protested against caste, and preached the equality of all men. They exerted all their strength to pull down the artificial barriers which Hinduism had set up between man and man, and to a certain extent, succeeded in doing so. Their success is not to be measured by the number of followers they have left behind, though that number is large. They must have indirectly influenced the lives of many who still continued to follow the banner of orthodox Hinduism.

Caste qualification dispensed with in the case of men of special sanctity.

The Hindu scarcely recognises any heroes but those of religion; and amongst them he dispenses with caste-qualifications. It is note-worthy, that the non Bráhman castes have supplied more heroes than the Bráhmans. The most widely worshipped Avatáras, Ráma and Krishna were Kshatriyas. The great sages Vyása and Válmikí were of much lower origin.* The great majority of the minor Avatáras of mediæval India were non-Bráhmans. The only Bráhman Avatáras of note were Parasuráma, Samkaráchárya, and Chaitanya.

* Vyása was the illegitimate son of a Bráhman and a Dásakanyá. Tradition represents Válmikí to have been a Koli, one of the lowest of aboriginal tribes.

His spiritual temperament has been the blessing as well as the curse of the Hindu. If his spirituality has made him bear the ills of life with fortitude and equanimity, it has also contributed to intensify those evils. It is partly owing to his spirituality that he is happy even in starvation; it is also partly owing to his devotion to religion, to his scrupulous regard for its injunctions in social matters that he has brought this state of chronic starvation upon himself. If for centuries his country has been depleted by foreigners, if to-day he is a helpless spectator of the ruin of the arts and manufactures of his country, it is, as we shall presently see, not a little owing to the sway of religion over him in matters which should not be governed by religion at all.

Domination of religion, a cause of mixed good:

Public spirit or patriotism as, we understand it, never existed amongst the Hindus; and the caste system is, at least partly, respon- sible for its non-existence. Organised resistance was offered to the early incursions of the Mahomedans, but only by the fighting castes. There was a great display of what may be called patriotism by them. On memorable occasions even their women melted down their ornaments to support a patriotic war. No disgrace rankled deeper in their breasts than

absence of patriotism partly due to caste, a socio-religious institution.

the disgrace of a defeat in battle. Rather than surrender, they often perished sword in hand. They were patriotic; but they were patriotic more for the honour of their race and their class than from a love of their countrymen generally. There was scarcely any bond of sympathy between them and the teeming millions who composed the lower castes. The mass of the people considered the maintenance of the Government the business of the Rájputs with which they had no concern. As soon as the King and his army were defeated, there was an end of all opposition. India was well-populated at the time of the Mahomedan occupation. Had the Hindus been permeated by a sense of nationality and of patriotism, it would have been impossible for the Mahomedans to establish their empire in India. The Rájputs resisted, and resisted with all their might, but they never got the co-operation of the mass of the people, nor did they expect it. The want of a centralised government did less harm to the Hindus than this want of a national feeling. The absence of centralisation was, in one respect, a hindrance to Mahomedan progress. The whole country had to be conquered in detail. The defeat of Prithvirája, of Delhi, meant only the subjugation of his territory. There were many other states, the chiefs of which of-

fered resistance, like Prithvirája. Thus the advance of the invader was contested at every step. But owing to the absence of a national feeling, as soon as the military classes gave in, all resistance was at an end.

Interference with religion, the most important *casus belli* with Hindus.

So long as their religion was not encroached upon the mass of the Hindus did not much care who governed them. The only determined national opposition to the Mahomedan rule was during the reign of the bigoted Aurangzeb who persecuted the Hindus. He reimposed the Jezia, a capitation tax on the Hindus, demolished their temples, and forbade them to ride in palanquins without premission. They were called upon to pay heavier duties than the Mahomedans. And the opposition which these measures evoked shook the foundations of the empire, which had been built up by the enlightened and tolerant policy of his predecessors. The Hindus all round Delhi assembled in vast numbers to pray for the recall of the Jezia. But the Emperor would not pay heed to their complaints *

* One day when he went to public prayer at the great mosque on the sabbath, a vast multitude of Hindus thronged the road from the palace to the mosque, with the object of seeking relief. All kinds of shopkeepers from the Urdubázár, and mechanics and workmen left off work and pressed into the way. "The infidel inhabitants of the city and the country round," says the orthodox Khafi Khan, "made great

The only occasion when the Hindus offered serious opposition to the English rule was when the British Government was supposed to endanger their religion. The greased cartridges were undoubtedly the immediate cause of the Sepoy war in 1857. There was no doubt widespread discontent caused by the annexation policy of Dalhousie. But political causes alone would never have been sufficient to excite the Hindu Sepoys as they were excited in 1857. The English are not disliked; nor can they be said to be liked. They keep the people at a distance, * and the people consider them unapproachable. The best of them are generally looked upon with wonder, somewhat like machines in good order which work with unerring

opposition to the payment of the *Jesia*. There was not a district where the people, with the help of Faujdars, did not make disturbances and resistance." Sir H. M. Elliot's "History of India" Vol. VII. pp. 296,310.

* The Anglo-Saxon nations "are habitually singularly narrow, unappreciative, and unsympathetic. The great source of their national virtue is the sense of duty, the power of pursuing a course which they believe to be right." (Lecky, "History of European Morals," Introduction p. 153).

"The English are unable to enter into the heart of these vast multitudes [the Indians], so gentle, so weak, so ready to open and to give themselves, if only one could speak with them." (Sir C. W. Dilke: "Problems of Great Britain," Lond. 1890, Vol. II. p. 124).

precision. * The secret of the English Rule lies not so much in its military strength, † or in the benefits it is supposed to confer, but in the caste-system, in the general indifference of the people to any thing which is not connected with their religion, and in their peaceful disposition fostered by a spiritual civilisation.

* There are a few who excite warmer feelings:—"In my official capacity," says Dr. Bradshaw "I have visited almost every spot in the Madras Presidency in which Sir Thomas Munro lived or encamped, and can speak from personal knowledge of the impression that great administrator has left on the face of the country, the system on which it is governed, and on the hearts of the people. From Salem the Rev. W. Robinson, writing to me, says: "Munro's name is held in the greatest reverence in this district, and the highest compliment they can pay a civilian is to compare him to Munro. I have talked to old natives who cherish his memory as that of their greatest benefactor. In the Ceded Districts boys are still named after him "Munrolappa." In the Cuddapah district wandering mendicants sing ballads to his praise. At Gooty a Brahman schoolmaster recently informed me that Sir Thomas Munro is styled Mandava Rishi. Mandava Rishi being no other than Munro deified. In the recent season of scarcity, 1891-92, at a meeting held at Gooty with the object of petitioning Government for a reduction of the land assessment, near the end of the proceedings an old ryot stood up and merely said in Telugu: Oh for Munro Sahib back again!" ("Life of Sir Thomas Munro," "Rulers of India" Series Introduction p. 7).

† The following extract is from the newspaper report of a lecture delivered by Lieut. General A. Phelps at a meeting of the East Indian Association in London on February 27, 1894:—

"The crude idea of military newcomers that India has been conquered by the sword and must be held by the sword, is dispelled when the young officer realises how dependent Anglo-Indian troops are on natives for transport, supply, ambulance, and all the wants of exotic foreigners, and learns, that native co-operation has played a

religion hitherto the only common bond among Hindus.

But men belonging to all castes from the highest to the lowest, receiving the same education, enjoying the same privileges, and suffering under the same disabilities, are forming a powerful class, the strength of which is daily increasing. Improved means of communication have removed the physical barriers ; and English education has removed the social and intellectual barriers which formerly stood in the way of a national unity ; and a united India, under present conditions, is no longer a Utopian dream. Such a movement, as the National Congress, would have been an impossibility in any pre-British period. Congresses have ere now been held in India in which representatives from its remotest

great part in the conquest of India, and is essential to the maintenance of British rule. The civlilian notion that a heartfelt appreciation of Western arts, law, order and ethics, is the cause of the acceptance of British dominion, is equally crude to those who realise the steadfast clinging to and preference for their own customs and laws which markedly characterised our Indian fellow subjects. Laws framed on Western ideas have made but a feeble impression ; and unwilling acquiescence, without a hearty absorption of principles, cannot furnish the cement to bind alien ideas into a coherent or effective public opinion. Neither does the missionary idea—the notion that the natives are eager to adopt what appears to them the tangle of familiar, yet strange, doctrines which Padre Sahebs of various sects press on their acceptance—explain the situation. Yet in view of the enormous numbers of the natives in the vast peninsula and its dependencies, Anglo-India could not stem the tide if even a minority of the natives wished it away."

parts met. But they sat to deliberate upon religious matters. It is the common bond of religion that has hitherto bound the Hindus together as a nation. Political bond is the recent creation of British influence.

On a survey of the principal religions of the world, we find, that the influence of religion upon civilisation is salutary in proportion to its liberality with regard to the social, the intellectual, and the religious life of its followers. The protective spirit in religion, as in Government, is prejudicial to progress. Christianity has always been liberal in social matters. It has always preached the equality of man ; it has never set up artificial barriers between man and man, at least in Christendom. In this respect it has always been favourable to the social evolution of Europe. But for many centuries, Roman Catholicism pursued a policy of systematic persecution for religious and intellectual heresy ; and so far as it did so, it hindered progress.

The protective policy of religion injurious to progress :

"Llorente, who had free access to the archives of the Spanish Inquisition, assures us that by that tribunal alone more than 31,000 persons were burnt, and more than

Illustrations from the history of Christianity; the Inquisition,

290,000 condemned to punishments less severe than death. The number of those who were put to death for their religion in the Netherlands alone, in the reign of Charles V., has been estimated by a very high authority at 50,000 and at least half as many perished under his son. And when to these memorable instances we add the innumerable less conspicuous executions that took place, from the victims of Charlemagne to the free-thinkers of the seventeenth century, when we recollect that after the mission of Dominic the area of the persecution comprised nearly the whole of Christendom, and that its triumph was in some districts so complete as to destroy every memorial of the contest, the most callous nature must recoil with horror from the spectacle. For these atrocities were not perpetrated in the brief paroxysms of a reign of terror, or by the hands of obscure sectaries, but were inflicted by a triumphant Church, with every circumstance of solemnity and deliberation. Nor did the victims perish by a rapid and painless death, but by one which was carefully selected as among the most polignant that man can suffer. They were usually burnt alive. They were burnt alive not unfrequently by a slow fire. They were burnt alive after their constancy had been tried by the most ex-

cruciating agonies that minds fertile in torture could devise." *

persecution of Galileo, and of Bruno.

In 1632 Galileo published his work entitled "The system of the World," its object being the vindication of the Copernican doctrine. He was summoned before the Inquisition at Rome, "accused of having asserted that the earth moves round the sun. He was declared to have brought upon himself the penalties of heresy. 'On his knees, with his hand on the Bible, he was compelled to abjure and curse the doctrine of the movement of the earth. What a spectacle! This venerable man, the most illustrious of his age, forced by the threat of death to deny facts which his judges as well as himself knew to be true! He was then committed to prison, treated with remorseless severity during the remaining ten years of his life, and was denied burial in consecrated ground." *

Bruno came to the conclusion that the pantheistic views of Averroes were not far from the truth, "that there is an Intellect which animates the universe, and

* "History of the Rise and Influence of the spirit of Rationalism in Europe." By W. E. H. Lecky Vol. II. (1882), p. 32.

* Draper, "Conflict between Religion and Science" (International Scientific Series) pp. 171-172

of this Intellect the visible world is only an emanation or manifestation originated and sustained by force derived from it, and were that force withdrawn, all things would disappear. This ever-present, all-pervading Intellect is God, who lives in all things, even such as seem not to live; that everything is ready to become organized, to burst into life. God is therefore, 'the one Sole Cause of things,' 'the All in All.' * * * * On the demand of the spiritual authorities, Bruno was removed from Venice to Rome, and confined in the prison of the Inquisition, accused not only of being a heretic but also a heresiarch, who had written things unseemly concerning religion; the special charge against him being that he had taught the plurality of worlds, a doctrine repugnant to the whole tenor of Scripture and inimical to revealed religion, especially as regards the plan of salvation. After an imprisonment of two years he was brought before his judge, declared guilty of the acts alleged, excommunicated; and, on his nobly refusing to recant, was delivered over to the secular authorities to be punished 'as mercifully as possible, and without the shedding of his blood,' the horrible formula for burning a prisoner at the stake. Knowing well that though his tormentors might destroy his body, his thoughts would still live among men, he said to his judges,

"Perhaps it is with greater fear that you pass the sentence upon me than I receive it. The sentence was carried into effect, and he was burnt at Rome, February 16th, A.D. 1600." *

The Reformation diminished the protective spirit of Christianity, and thus favoured progress.

The Reformation by rejecting tradition and establishing the right of private interpretation of the Scriptures laid the foundation of intellectual progress in modern Europe. It is true the leaders of the Reformation, Luther and Melanchthon, were strongly against science. The reformers, no less than the Catholics, believed that there was no science but what was in strict accordance with Genesis. According to Luther, Aristotle is "truly a devil, a horrid calumniator, a wicked sycophant, a prince of darkness, a real Apollyon, a beast, a most horrid imposter on mankind, one in whom there is scarcely any philosophy, a public and professed liar, a goat, a complete epicure, this twice execrable Aristotle." Calvin was influenced by the principles of the Inquisition when he caused Servetus to be burnt. But, Protestantism by establishing the maxim of the individual liberty of Scripture-interpretation diminished the protective spirit of Christianity

* Draper, *op. cit.* pp. 179-180.

in intellectual matters, and so, on the whole, favoured the progress of Natural Science which is the intellectual basis of the modern civilisation of the West.

Liberality of Hinduism in purely religious and intellectual matters favourable to progress.

Hinduism has never been guided by the protective spirit in purely religious and intellectual matters. By its tolerant policy in such matters it has helped progress. It has never been wedded to such dogmatic views about man and nature as to make any departure therefrom punishable as heresy. The most antagonistic creeds have existed in India, from the remotest times, without scarcely ever giving rise to persecution worth the name. Views were fearlessly expressed long before the Christian era, respecting the nature of the microcosm and the nature of the macrocosm, for the like of which in Christian Europe, and in comparatively recent times, thousands of the Averroists were mercilessly burnt and imprisoned, Bruno was made a martyr, and Galileo died an ignominious death. There is scarcely any form of faith from monotheism and pantheism to idolatry and fetishism, that Hinduism does not comprise. There is still a good deal of misconception about that religion. All Hindus are generally

considered by Europeans to be gross idolators and fetishists. The fact is, however, that the cultivated among them, including even those that have not received the light of English education, are in reality generally monotheists and pantheists.

But whatever their religious belief, the attitude of the Hindus towards other religions is one of philosophic toleration. "The Brahmans who compiled," says H. H. Wilson, "a code of Hindu law, by command of Warren Hastings preface their performance by affirming the equal merit of every form of religious worship. Contrarieties of belief, and diversities of religion, they say, are in fact part of the scheme of Providence; for as a painter gives beauty to a picture by a variety of colours, or as a gardener embellishes his garden with flowers of every hue, so God appointed to every tribe its own faith, and every sect its own religion, that man might glorify him in diverse modes, all having the same end, and being equally acceptable in his sight. To the same effect it is stated by Dr. Mill in his preface to the Khrista Sangíta, or sacred history of Christ, in Sanskrit verse, that he had witnessed the eager reception of the work by devotees from every part of India, even in the temple of Kálí, near Calcutta, and that it was read and chaunted by

them, with a full knowledge of its anti-idolatrous tendency."*

*"Essays and Lectures on the Religion of the Hindus" (1862) Vol. II. p. 82. Mr. James Routledge, describes in the following terms the religious attitude of the late Kristo Das Pal: "He met the missionaries on a principle as simple as that on which he met the Government. He claimed for them the utmost freedom. He demanded from them that they should use no undue influences; that they should not coerce, and should not buy converts. Grant him these conditions, and the devoted Jesuit and the devoted Presbyterian were alike his friend. Deny him these conditions, and he had for the man who bought converts the most resolute, the most unflinching and the most redoubtable opposition...... Every body had justice and fair play from this noble Hindu.............. His own faith he allowed no man two interfere with. He was a Hindu of Hindus. To say that he worshipped images would be absurd. No intelligent and educated Hindu does that, at any rate in these times. That he worshipped God, I know, though what idea exactly he associated with the term, I do not know, and I shall not lament much if I never do." "Kristodas Pal—A study," by N. Ghose, p. 161. The following is one among numerous citations which could be made from the works of travellers to illustrate the tolerant attitude of the Hindus towards foreign religions: "The people [of Calicut] are infidels; consequently he [Abdul Rizak, ambassador from the Court of Persia about the middle of the fifteenth century] considers himself in an enemy's country, as the Mahomedans consider every one who has not received the Koran. Yet he admits that they meet with perfect toleration, and even favour, have two mosques, and are allowed to pray in public. Goods may be landed and may remain exposed in the markets, without the least danger, and on being sold, pay only a fortieth of the value."—Murray's "Discoveries and Travels in Asia" Vol. II. p. 20. The Hindu sages of ancient as well as modern times remind one of Gibbon's observations about the philosophers of antiquity: "In their writings and conversation, the philosophers of antiquity asserted the independent dignity of reason; but they resigned their actions to the commands of law and custom. Viewing with a smile of pity and indulgence, the various errors of the vulgar, they diligently practised the ceremonies of their fathers, devoutly frequented the temples of the gods; and some times condescending to act a part on the theatre of superstition, they

One of the most important causes of the stability of Hinduism is this toleration which implies adaptability to its environment. Mahomedanism made but few converts except among the Hinduised aborigines of Eastern Bengal. Nor has Christianity been more successful than Mahomedanism. The Indian converts to Christianity form a comparatively insignificant fraction of the total population; and they mostly belong to the lower ranks of society. Not many educated Hindus now embrace Christianity. The fact is, to quench his spiritual thirst the Hindu has no need to search for springs outside his religion. *

Interference of Hinduism in social matters injurious to progress:

But Hinduism has been as intolerant of social heresy as it has been tolerant of intellectual or religious heresy. The protective spirit of Hinduism in social matters has been as injurious to progress as the absence of that spirit in religious and intellectual

concealed the sentiments of an athiest under the sacerdotal robes. Reasoners of such a temper were scarcely inclined to wrangle about their respective modes of faith or of worship. It was indifferent to them what shape the folly of the multitude might choose to assume." "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" Vol. I. Ch. II.

* According to the last Census, out of a total po[illegible] there are 2,036,590 Christians of Indian and A[illegible] empire (including Burma.)

matters has been favourable to it. In the second Book of our history we shall dwell upon the efforts of the advanced Hindus to free themselves from the despotic sway of their religion in social matters. There are two classes of such reformers, whom we shall call Neo-Hindus. They both agree in the necessity of social reforms, and differ only in the fact of the policy of one, the larger class being characterised by great caution. *

* The position of the Neo-Hindus of the cautious type was defined by the Hon. Justice M. G. Ranade at a meeting of the Sixth National Social Conference: "The process of growth is always slow, where it has to be a sure growth. The best natures naturally want to shorten this long process in their desire to achieve the work of a century in a decade. This temptation has to be resisted, and in this respect the teachings of the evolution doctrine have great force, because they teach that growth is structural and organic, and must take slow effect in all parts of the organism, and can not neglect any, and favour the rest. There are those amongst us who think that, in this connection, the work of the reformer is confined only to a brave resolve to break with the past, and do what our individual reason suggests as proper and fit. The power of long-formed habits add tendencies is however ignored in this view of the matter. "The true reformer has not to write upon a clean slate. His work is more often to complete the half-written sentence. He has to produce the ideal out of the actual, and by the help of the actual." We have one continuous stream of life flowing past us, and "we must accept as valid the acts which were noted in the past and on the principles of the past," and seek to turn the stream with a gentle bend here, and a gentle bend there, to fructify the land; we can not afford to dam it altogether, or force it into a new channel. It is this circumstance which constitutes the moral interest of the struggle, and the advice so frequently given—that we have only to shake our bonds free and they will fall off themselves;—is one which matured and larger

The individual as well as the social life of the Hindu is regulated by religion. From his birth to his death he cannot eat, drink, wake, sleep, or even stir out from his house without consulting his religion. In the struggle for existence with the Western nations, he is sorely handicapped by his marriage and caste-customs which are prescribed by his religious works (the Sástras). His birth is for a religious purpose, the offering of oblations to the manes. His entire existence may be said, without exaggeration to be a round of religious duties. In the olden days, the higher castes, especially the Bráhmans, were required to devote the latter portion of their lives solely to religious exercises. The standard of purity set before the Bráhmans was indeed very high; from adolescence to death, his was a life of study, discipline, and devotion. It should in justice to the Bráhman be observed, that he has to some extent maintained this standard through centuries of political, social and religious vicissitudes. Until now the Bráhman has seldom engaged in military or money-making occupations. There have been Kshatriya

experience seldom supports. We cannot break with the past altogether; with our past we should not break altogether, for it is a rich inheritance, and we have no reason to be ashamed of it." (Report of the Sixth National Social Conference." Appendix, pp. 20-21).

Kings, Súdra Kings, and aboriginal Kings but seldom any Bráhman Kings.

stagnation the result of such interference;

Hedged in by minute rules and restrictions, the various classes forming the Hindu community, have had but little room for expansion and progress. The result has been stagnation. A high-caste Hindu may not eat food cooked by a member of a lower caste. His diet and drink are restricted and regulated. He must not cross the sea. The Bráhmans alone can read the sacred books. An infinity of such rules has hampered the intellectual, commercial, and industrial progress of the Hindus. The wonder is not that they have advanced so little within the last eight centuries, but that they have stood their ground so well as they have done.

Caste;

Hinduism governs Hindu society through the caste-system. It has been in existence for nearly three thousand years. After sometime, its iniquity must have been felt by many a cultured and broad-minded Hindu. This is sufficiently shown by many passages in the religious works of the Hindus in which it is enjoined that it is not birth but good work and spiritual development, that give one a a right to the title of Bràhman. Hindu reformers from the time of Gautama Buddha to the present day have

attacked caste from within, and Mahomedans and Christians have attacked it from without. Still it is there, such is the solidarity it attained at an early period of Hindu history.

its good, and its evil.

The most divergent views have been entertained with regard to the influence of caste on Hindu progress. While some have extolled it to the skies, others have condemned it as "the most disastrous and blighting of human institutions." The truth lies midway. It is true, that in the earliest stages, there was progress in spite of it. It is even possible, that it then aided progress by a specialisation of the social functions. But, after the Hindu society had attained a certain stage of progress, all the good that caste did was to keep it at that stage, to prevent Hindu society from going to pieces. Caste has held together the heterogeneous elements, of which Hindu society is composed, but by keeping them permanently distinct, it has probably prevented that fusion which, in other countries, as in England, has produced more or less homogeneous nations.* Caste has prevented the

* We say "probably," because of the ethnic difference in the constituent elements of the Hindu society—a difference which did not exist in the case of the people of England.

Hindus from sinking ; but it has also prevented them from rising.

The Bráhmans have handed down the learning and wisdom of their ancestors from generation to generation. The surviving representatives of the Kshatriyas are still found to possess to some extent the martial qualities of their forefathers. The artisan classes have for many centuries maintained their skill and workmanship. But progress is always relative, and stagnation in social movement really means retrogression. While other societies have moved forward in the path of progress, Hindu society, by remaining stationary, has been left behind ; and this stationariness is largely due to the institution of caste.* Caste has preserved order, but has, at the same time, hindered progress. Except two or three commentators, the Bráhmans have not during the last seven centuries, produced a single writer of note in any department of human knowledge. They have forgotten the principles of the mathematical and medical sciences in which their ancestors had acquired such distinction ; and these sciences have been reduced to mere arts by which ignorant astrologers and indigent

* The other important cause of this stationariness, as will be shewn hereafter, was the Mahomedan conquest.

physicians earn a living. When a century ago, Sir William Jones, the founder of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, offered ample stipends to any Hindu astronomer who could name in Sanskrit all the constellations which he would point out, and to any Hindu physician who could bring him all the plants mentioned in Sanskirt books, he was assured that no Pandit in India even pretended to possess the knowledge which he required. Monopoly is unfavourable to intellectual, as it is to all other progress. Learning or wisdom, like industrial or commercial enterprise, cannot long be kept up as the exculsive heritage of a limited class. The Kshatriyas bravely resisted the invasions of the Mahomedans, but without the co-operation of the other classes of the Hindu community they could not long resist successfully ; and caste rendered such co-operation an impossibility.* The artisans and traders

* Auguste Comte, who has forcibly pointed out some of the good points of caste, observes: "Notwithstanding all these qualities, the theocratic system (caste) could not but be hostile to progress, through its excessive stability, which stiffened into an obstinate immoveableness when new expansions required a change of social classification. The supreme class appropriated all its immense resource of every kind to the preservation of its almost absolute dominion after it had lost by long enjoyment of power, the chief stimulous to its own progression." ("The Positive Philosophy," translated by Harriet Martineau, Vol. II. p. 240).

have ever been without the aspiration or the education to rise high, kept down as they have been at a low level both socially and intellectually. However wealthy they might be, their social rank could never be improved; however necessary it might be, they were not allowed to receive any but an elementary education. Illiterate and unaspiring, they have been content to occupy the position assigned them in the Hindu society and to follow their hereditary occupations as far as possible, but have not kept pace with modern progress, and have never exhibited enterprise and inventive powers such as characterise the modern civilisation of the West.

"The idolators of India" observes the French traveller, Tavernier, "are so numerous that for one Mahomedan there are five or six Gentiles. It is astonishing to see how this enormous multitude of men has allowed itself to be subjected by so small a number of persons, and has bent readily under the yoke of the Mahomedan princes. But the astonishment ceases when one considers that these idolators have no union among themselves, and that superstition has introduced so strange a diversity of opinions and customs, that they never agree with one another." (Travels in India, By Jean Baptiste Tavernier. Vol. II. London, 1889, p. 181.)

Hindu Social progress in pre-Mahomedan period,

The history of caste and of other socio-religious institutions which will be given in the second Book, will show, that they have changed considerably since the

early Vedic period, * and that they have attained their present relative unpliability at a comparatively recent period. As may be expected from what we have said already, the domination of Hinduism over Hindu society became more and more stringent with the decay and degeneration of Hindu civilisation during the later Puránic or the Mahomedan period.† During the progressive period of Hindu civilisation, Hindu society changed, and changed greatly, so as to keep pace with progress. The principles which governed the social

* The caste-system has attained its present comparative rigidity after going through many changes. Sufficient evidence will be adduced in the Second Book of our history to show, that it was primarily of ethnic origin. Nowhere in the oldest authoritative works which treat of caste, do we meet with such castes as those of weavers, blacksmiths, silversmiths, barbers, &c. Had the caste-system been propounded by one or more legislators to secure division of labour, as was supposed by writers like James Mill, those are the very castes which should have first made their appearance. Cloths made of cotton and other materials are not only frequently mentioned in such works as the Manusamhitá, but there are allusions to rich and expensive garments even in the ancient hymns of the Rigveda. From the constant mention of gems and of ornaments made of the precious metals, we may infer, that they were in no small demand. It is thus evident that these and smilar arts and manufactures were long practised by certain classes of the Hindu community without their forming distinct castes.

† The periods into which we have for the sake of convenience divided Hindu history are:

(1) Vedic [B. C. 1500-500]; (2) Buddhist-Hindu [B. C. 500 to A. D. 700]; (3) Puránic (A. D. 700 to 1800); (4) Recent.

progress of the Hindus, however, differed considerably from those which underlie the social progress of modern Europe. The difference is, indeed so striking, that not a few social reformers at the present day—Hindu as well as non-Hindu—who are imbued with Western ideas, and who take Western society as their model, ascribe the origin of such un-Western, and therefore, according to them, retrogressive customs, as the seclusion of women, their early marriage, and the non-marriage of widows, to Hindu degeneracy.

on lines different from those on which Western society has advanced.

There are reasons to conclude that such customs were absent in the Vedic period, especially in the earlier portion of it. Indo-Aryan society then presented many points of resemblance with the Aryan society of modern Europe. Ladies then enjoyed considerable amount of freedom. They were not married early; they often chose their own husbands; they did not lead a secluded life; they danced and sang; learned women took part in philosophical disputations in public assemblies; widows if they chose, could marry again. But, this freedom appears to have been coexistent with a laxity of sexual morals unknown in later times.*

Freedom in the earlier Vedic period,

* There was similar laxity among several other peoples of antiquity.

One of the Rigvedic Rishis solemnly prays to Pushan to protect him on his journey and provide him with a supply of fair damsels.* Vyása, than whose name there is none more venerable in Sanskrit literature, and many of the heroes of the Mahábhárata † are represented as not having been born in wedlock. The traditions regarding them, and such legends as those of Dírghatamas and his mother Mamatá‡ and of Svetaketu, son of Uddánaka, and his mother,§ when divested of their poetical and supernatural elements, testify to a looseness of sexual morals quite unknown in later times. The memory of a time when the Indo-Aryans were not particularly restrained by principles of sexual morality such as began to prevail in the Hindu society from the later Vedic period, and such as now prevail in all civilised societies, is abundantly preserved in the Mahábhárata. || The following extracts from the

accompanied by lax morals.

* R. V. IX. 67, 10.

† Dhritaráshtra, Pándu, Yudhishthira, Bhíma, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadava, Karna, Drona &c. Some god or other was the father of every one of these warriors. And it is possible to suppose that they were represented as god-descended to increase their importance. But, in that case, Krishna, the greatest of the heroes of antiquity, should have been represented as god-descended also.

‡ Mahábhárata, A'diparva. Ch. 104.

§ Mahábhárata, A'diparva, Ch. 122.

|| Pándu gravely teaches his wife, Kuntí, that wives may do as they like except at certain times!—Mahábhárata, A'diparva, Ch. 122.

Harivamsa describing a seaside picnic given by Krishna hardly require any comment :

"Having thus issued his orders to the sea, he [Krishna] commenced to play with Arjuna, while Satyabhámá, incited by a wink of Krishna, began to throw water on Nárada. Then Balaráma, tottering with drink, with great glee fell into the water, and beckoning the charming daughter of Revata by his side, took her by the hand. The sons of Krishna and the leading Bhaimas, who belonged to the party of Ráma, joyous and bent on pleasure, unmindful of their dresses and ornaments, and excited by drink, followed him to the sea. The Bhaimas belonging to the party of Krishna headed by Nishatha, and Ulmuka, arrayed in many-coloured garments and rich jewels and bedecked with garlands of *párijáta* flowers, with bodies painted with sandal-wood paste and unguents, excited by wine, and carrying aquatic musical instruments in their hands, began to sing songs appropriate for the occasion. By order of Krishna. hundreds of courtesans, led by the heavenly Apsarases played various pleasing tunes on water and other instruments. * * * Krishna and Nárada, with all those who were on their side, began to pelt water on Bala and his party ; and they in their turn did the same on the party of Krishna. The wives of Bala and Krishna, excited by libations of *arrack* [a strong spirituous liquor] followed their example, and squirted water in great glee with syringes in their hands. Some of the Bhaima ladies, over-weighted by the load both of love and wine, with crimson eyes and masculine garbs, entertained themselves before the other ladies, squirting water." *

* Harivamsa quoted in Rájendra Lál Mitra's "Indo-Aryans" (1881), Vol. I. pp. 439-440. Harivamsa was written long after the time of Krishna; and there can be no doubt, that the poet in the description cited above has given full play to his imagination. It must be presumed, however, that he depicts the manners and customs of the time he describes with some approach to faithfulness. The Rása Lílá appears to have preserved the memory of such manners to the present day.

Bacchanalian scenes like these produced a violent revulsion of feeling towards the close of the Vedic period. A puritanic movement then set in. It is worthy of note, that this movement was synchronous with the promulgation of Vedantism, which is unquestionably a very sublime and philosophical form of religion. The moral reformation was accompanied not by religious reformation only but also by intellectual advancement of a high order; for, it was about the time of Gautama, at the close of the Vedic period or shortly after, that Hindu philosophy made the greatest progress.

Puritanic movement in the later Vedic period;

The puritanic movement was of a very comprehensive nature. Reformers are usually extremists; and the reformers we are speaking of were no exception to this rule. Intoxicating drinks were interdicted. Gautama said: "The householder who delights in the law should not indulge in intoxicating drinks, should not cause others to drink, should not sanction the acts of those who drink, knowing that it results in insanity." Lawgivers like Manu placed the drinking of spirituous liquors in the category of the most heinous sins, and prescribed the most awful penances for them. Dancing and singing, which were associated with drinking, fell into disre-

its comprehensive character.

pute. Meat-eating was greatly discouraged. "Meat can never be obtained" says an old Sútrakára "without injuring living beings, and to injure living beings does not procure heavenly bliss." Gambling which, like drinking, was a fruitful source of crime and misery in the earlier Vedic period was anathematised. Manu enjoined corporal punishment for gambling and betting. Attempts were made to put ladies under restraints to which they had been utter strangers. "In childhood" says Manu "a female must be subject to her father; in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent."

Origin of early marriage &c.

A high standard of chastity was established. It was partly for the maintenance of this standard, and partly on grounds of social expediency, that the males among the Dvijas (the higher or "twice-born" castes) were subjected to a rigorous course of discipline; that early marriage was prescribed for females; and that widow-marriage was discouraged. These restrictions originated at a time of great intellectual and religious ferment and were accompanied by others which are looked upon as reforms in all civilised societies; and the position of some social reformers at the present day, that they came

into existence at a time of degeneration is historically untenable. Indeed, the fact of the absence of such restrictions among the lower classes, coupled with that of the increase in their rigorousness with social status, clearly indicate the way in which they originated.

Origin of restrictions upon food and drink.

Restrictions upon food and drink were also the result of the earnest movement of reformation to which we have just referred. The bill of fare of the earlier Vedic period was a very comprehensive one; it included beef and other articles forbidden at the present day. Its gradual contraction, as regards animal food, was not solely due to the sublime tenderness for animal life so eloquently preached by Gautama, but also to economic, hygienic, and æsthetic considerations. An agricultural people like the Indo-Aryans could not have been long in being deeply impressed with the immense usefulness of the cow. They must also have soon found out the unsuitability of beef as an article of food in a hot climate like that of India. That hygienic and æsthetic considerations must have weighed with the Aryan law-givers in their interdiction of domestic pigs and domestic fowls is proved by the fact that the flesh of wild pigs and of wild fowls is permitted.

The Indo-Aryan refomers instead of leaving their reforms to the chance of adoption on their own merit endeavoured to enforce them by investing them with the authority of religious ordinances. They did not rest contented with demonstrating the evils of drinking intoxicants, but prescribed the severest punishments for those who were guilty of it. In all societies the liberty of the individual is to some extent curtailed for the good of the community. But the restrictions imposed by the Hindu reformers of the time we are speaking of exceeded the bounds within which they should always be limited. Whatever rules they thought would conduce to the good of their society were formulated by them in a way which made their violation a sacrilege. Thus commenced that relation of Hindu religion to Hindu society, which instead of being that of friends or brothers, or that of sovereigns of equal authority, gradually became, especially in later times of degeneration, a relation of almost absolute despotism. So long as Hindu civilisation was progressive, so long as the proportion of the thoughtful to the unthinking, and of the educated to the uneducated, was a respectable one, so long as the influence of Bráhmans was kept down by that of

Increased stringency of socio-religious rules owing to the decay of Hindu civilisation in the Puránic period.

Srámans, so long this relation was not productive of any evil consequences of a serious nature. Notwithstanding, for instance, the protests of sages, like Manu, against widow-marriage, and notwithstanding their injuctions in favour of early marriage for girls, sufficient evidence will be adduced in our history to show, that the adult marriage of females, and the remarriage, at least, of virgin widows continued to take place till probably the commencement of the Mahomedan period.

But matters changed with the decay of Hindu civilisation which began about that time. Buddhism which had acted as a lever to Bráhmanic ascendency was stamped out of the country; Mahomedan invaders ruthlessly scoured and ravaged it from one end to the other.* The Bráhmans lost the patronage of enlightened Hindu kings, and became more dependant than ever for their living on the gifts of the lower castes, with whom the

* Referring to Sabuktagin and his son Mahmud, Alberuni says: "God be merciful to both father and son! Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country, and performed those wonderful exploits by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions. and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people." "Hindu Science has retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and has fled to places which our hand cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Benares and other places." Alberuni's "India." Translated by E. C. Sachau Vol. I. p. 22.

superstitious part of Hinduism is always most popular. They had now to please the mob more than ever. The influence which had produced the sublime and the grand in Hindu works vanished; the influence which had produced the base and the ridiculous in them, gradually increased. * The number and influence of the wise and learned few gradually vanished, while the number and influence of the credulous and ignorant many remained, and increased, and throve. Increasing ignorance brought with it increasing superstition and all its concomitant evlis. The qualifications which according to the older Samhitás, like those of Manu and Vasishtha, entitle Bráhmans to veneration and gifts disappear from the later Samhitás, like those of Brihaspati and Vyása. "Bráhmans" says Vasishtha "who neither study nor teach the Veda, nor

* The following description by Gibbon of the Greeks previous to their subjugation by the Turks applies to the Hindus during the Mahomedan Period: "They held in their lifeless hands the riches of their fathers without inheriting the spirit which had created and improved that sacred patrimony. They read, they praised, they compiled, but their languid souls seemed alike incapable of thought and action. In the revolution of ten centuries not a single discovery was made to exalt the dignity or promote the happiness of mankind. Not a single idea has been added to the speculative systems of antiquity, and a succession of patient disciples became in their turn the dogmatic teachers of the next servile generation."

keep the sacred fires become equal to Súdras.......An elephant made of wood, an antelope made of leather, and a Bráhman ignorant of the Vedas, these three have nothing but the name of their kind." But later writers do not make any distinction between the learned and the ignorant among Bráhmans. They are all entitled to gifts; they are all sacred; they are all powerful. Outside the group of interested Bráhmans, there was now no one to dispute or even question their authority. They were now the sole interpreters of the Hindu Sástras; and it is no wonder that they interpreted in a way which conduced most to their interests. Whether they misquoted or misinterpreted, whether they were right or wrong, no one was in a position to judge. Whatever they now wrote or uttered was accepted as infallible truth. The practice of Sati (self-immolation of widows) of which there is scarcely any mention in the older Samhitás, became widely prevalent in the Puránic period; and the fact that the Sati's ornaments were the due of the Bráhman priests probably accounts for this prevalence at least to a great extent. It was to the interest of the Bráhman to encourage a practice which benefited him so substantially. The remarriage even of virgin widows which had been allowed by the older legislators was stopped. The res-

trictions of caste became more stringent than ever. It was to the interest of the Bráhman to multiply occasions for gifts to him, and to promote the despotism of religion over society. He was, however, not often guided by a sense of self-interest. The increasing ignorance of his class is more largely responsible for the increasing stringency of socio-religious rules. Hindu religion had, as we have seen, established its rule over Hindu society in pre-Puránic times. But while that society was progressive, while it possessed a respectable proportion of enlightened members, the rule could not become tyrannic. In the Puránic period, however increasing ignorance bred increasing superstition; and the government of religion became an almost unmitigated despotism.

Influence of physical causes upon civilisation.

There can be no doubt, that the physical features of a country have some causal connection with its progress, though the importance of this connection has sometimes been greatly exaggerated. The earliest civilisations sprang up in those parts of the globe where the physical causes, especially climate and soil, were most favourable; one of the reasons why the most advanced nations of modern Europe, the English, the French, and the Germans, were not civilised

till a late period in the history of man is to be found in the adverse nature of their physical environment. Their ancestors had to struggle against Nature in a way to which the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindus and Chinese were utter strangers. The struggle has left its impress on the character of the nations of North-Western Europe. Combative qualities have been highly developed in them. They are active, energetic, persevering, enterprising, and resolute. * These qualities

* The resoluteness is sometimes carried to a fault. A course of action once decided upon is resolutely persisted in, however palpable its iniquity may be. This feature becomes specially pronounced outside Europe, where the European appears to entertain a somewhat inordinate sense of the duty of maintaining his prestige and his vested interests.

"The necessity of not injuring" says Malcolm "the impression upon which the very foundation of our authority rests, obliges Government to carry through, at all hazards, every dispute and contest with the inhabitants of our own provinces, or those of any State which we protect. The measures of a local officer which occasion this necessity, may be disapproved of; but our name and ascendancy must be supported, and victory must, on any terms, be obtained; for we cannot long exist if our strength be even doubted." (Malcolm's "Central India" 1823, Vol. II., pp. 267-268).

"There is nothing more common," says Lecky, "than for men who in private life are models of the most scrupulous integrity to justify or excuse the most flagrant acts of political dishonesty and violence. ... Not unfrequently too by a curious moral paradox, political crimes are closely connected with national virtues. A people who are submissive, gentle and loyal, fall by reason of these very qualities under a despotic government, but this uncontrolled power has never failed to exercise a most pernicious influence on rulers, and their numerous acts of

again have greatly helped in the development of their civilisation of which industrialism may be said to be the distinguishing feature. Wealth being the indispensable condition of their progress, its acquisition engages large multitudes in endless industrial and commercial pursuits, and nature and man in all quarters of the globe have been made to minister to their ever-increasing wants. *

rapacity and aggression being attributed in history to the nation they represent, the national character is wholly misrepresented. ("History of European Morals," Introduction).

* Sometimes, however, in a way which is not quite consonant with usually accepted ethical principles. Matters do not appear to be different now from what they were when the following was written by Herbert Spencer in 1876:

"In China, India, Polynesia, Africa, the East Indian Archipelago, reasons—never wanting to the aggressor—are given for widening our empire: without force if it may be, and with force if needful. After annexing the Fiji Islands, voluntarily ceded only because there was no practicable alternative, there comes now the proposal to take possession of Samoa. Accepting in exchange a territory subject to a treaty, we ignore the treaty and make the assertion of it a ground for war with the Ashantees. In Sherbro our agreements with native chiefs having brought about universal disorder, we send a body of soldiers to suppress it, and presently will allege the necessity of extending our rule over a large area. So again in Perak. A resident sent to advise becomes a resident who dictates; appoints as sultan the most plastic candidate in place of one preferred by the chiefs; arouses resistance which becomes a plea for using force; finds usurpation of the government needful; has his proclamation torn down by a native; who is thereupon stabbed by the resident's servant; the resident is himself killed as a consequence; then (nothing being said of the murder of

Indirect influence of physical causes upon religious and intellectual progress.

Their national character, again, has greatly influenced their religious as well as intellectual progress. Their Christianity is no more like the Christianity as preached by Christ, than the Buddhism of the Thibetans is like the Buddhism as preached by Gautama. *

the native), the murder of the resident leads to outcries for vengeance, and a military expedition establishes British rule. Be it in the slaying of Karen tribes who resist surveyors of their territory, or be it in the demand made on the Chinese in pursuance of the doctrine that a British traveller, sacred wherever he may choose to intrude, shall have his death avenged on some one, we everywhere find pretexts for differences which lead to acquisitions. In the House of Commons and in the Press, the same spirit is shown. During the debate on the Suez Canal purchase, our Prime Minister, referring to the possible annexation of Egypt, said that the English people, wishing the Empire to be maintained, "will not be alarmed even if it be increased;" and was cheered for so saying. And recently, urging that it is time to blot out Dahomey, the weekly organ of filibustering Christianity exclaims—"Let us take Whydah, and leave the savage to recover it."—"Principles of Sociology" (1876), Vol. I, pp. 602-3.

* The spirit of true Christianity does not appear to be well suited to the genius of Western civilisation. John Stuart Mill observes :

"To what an extent doctrines intrinsically fitted to make the deepest impression upon the mind may remain in it as dead beliefs, without being ever realized in the imagination, the feeling, or the understanding, is exemplified by the manner in which the majority of believers hold the doctrines of Christianity. By Christianity I here mean what is accounted such by all churches and sects—the maxims and precepts contained in the New Testament. These are considered sacred, and accepted as laws, by all professing Christians. Yet it is scarcely too much to say that not one Christian in a thousand guides or tests his individual conduct by reference to those laws. The standard to which he does refer it, is the custom of his nation, class or his religious

The intellectual advancement of modern Europe has chiefly been in the direction of Natural science, the prosecution of which is to no small extent, dependent upon habits of activity. Thus we see, how far-reaching is the influence of physical causes !

Influence of physical causes upon Hindu civilisation.

Just as the physical environment of the North-West of Europe has favoured the development of combativeness and activity,

profession. He has thus on the one hand, a collection of ethical maxims, which he believes to have been vouchsafed to him by infallible wisdom as rules for his government ; and on the other a set of every day judgments and practices, which go a certain length with some of those maxims, not so great a length with others, stand in direct opposition to some, and are, on the whole, a compromise between the Christian creed and the interests and suggestions of worldly life. To the first of these standards he gives his homage ; to the other his real allegiance. All Christians believe that the blessed are the poor and humble, and those who are ill-used by the world ; that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven ; that they should judge not, lest they be judged ; that they should swear not at all : that they should love their neighbours as themselves ; that if one take their cloak, they should give him their coat also ; that they should take no thought for the morrow ; that if they would be perfect they should sell all that they have and give it to the poor. They are not sincere when they say that they believe these things. They do believe them, as people believe what they have always heard lauded and never discussed. But in the sense of that living belief which regulates conduct, they believe these doctrines just up to the point to which it is usual to act upon them. * * * *
Now we may be well assured that the case was not thus but far otherwise, with the early Christians." ("On Liberty". Ch. II.)

so the physical environment of India has favoured the development of peacefulness and quietism.* The Indo-Aryans, as they spread from the Punjab along the valley of the Ganges, must have found the struggle for existence a comparatively easy one. A fertile soil, with but little attention, yielded them abundant harvests. Edible fruits, roots, and herbs were plentiful in a wild state; so much so, that one, if he was so minded, could live upon them. The heat of the climate rendered much clothing unnecessary, if not actually unpleasant during the greater portion of the year. The shelter of a tree or of a rude hut was often quite sufficient, and sometimes highly pleasant, more so than the shelter of a brick or stonebuilt house. The animal wants of their nature being thus easily satisfied, the Hindus early began to devote their attention to spiritual culture, to the great problems of life and death. All nature conspired to make them thoughtful and imaginative. †

* Which, however, is sometimes identical with indolence.

† "If I were asked," says Professor Max Muller, "under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply ponderud on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India." Again: "And in that study of the history of the human mind, in that study of ourselves, of our true selves, India occupies a place second to no other country."—"India what can it teach us," 1892, pp. 6, 14.

What was more pleasant than on a hot afternoon to sit under an umbrageous Banyan or Peepul tree and reflect or discuss? Microcosm was the study of the Hindu as macrocosm has been that of the modern European. Moral science was the intellectual basis of Hindu civilisation, as natural science is that of the modern civilisation of Europe. The path of salvation which has found most favour with the Hindus is absolute inaction and self-abnegation, the merging of the individual into the universal soul by profound meditation and ascetic discipline.

National character of the Hindus.

The same physical causes which have tended to make the Hindu thoughtful and imaginative have also tended to make him inactive. His virtues as well as vices are characterised by passivity. He would do his best to relieve such distress as presents itself at his house; but the most charitable Hindu would scarcely ever go out far to seek it out. He is a model of patience and peacefulness. When he persecutes, he persecutes indirectly and passively, rather than directly and actively. His worst form of persecution is excommunication, which means, that he will not eat, drink, or have any other social connection with the party excommunicated. The Hindus have far

less of the industrial and military qualities of European nations, but far more of the gentler qualities developed by a spiritual and quietist disposition,such as charity,hospitality sobriety, benevolence, forgiveness, and mercy.

The Greeks spoke of the ancient Hindus as "sober, moderate, peaceable; good soldiers; good farmers; remarkable for simplicity and integrity; so reasonable as never to have recourse to a lawsuit and so honest as nither to require locks to their doors nor writings to bind their agreements. Above all, it is said that no Indian was ever known to tell an untruth." *

James Forbes says in his "Oriental Memoirs":† "I sometimes frequented places where the natives had never seen an European, and were ignorant of every thing concerning us: there I beheld manners and customs simple as were those in the patriarchal age; there in the very style of Robecca and the damsels of Mesopotamia, the Hindoo villagers treated me with that artless hospitality so delightful in the poems of Homer, and other ancient records. On a sultry day, near a Zinore village, having rode faster than my attendants, while waiting their arrival under a tamarind tree, a young woman came to the well; I asked for a little water, but neither of us having a drinking vessel, she hastily left me, as I imagned, to bring an earthen cup for the purpose, as I should have polluted a vessel of metal: but as Jael when Sisera asked for water, "gave him milk, and brought forth butter in a lordly dish,"—Judges Ch. V. Ver. 25, so did this village damsel with more sincerity than Heber's wife, bring me a pot of milk, and a lump of butter on the delicate leaf of the banana, "the lordly dish" of the Hindoos. The former I gladly accepted; on my declining the latter she immediately made it up into two balls, and gave one to each of the oxen that drew my hackery. Butter is a luxury to these aminals, and enables them to bear additional fatigue."

* Elphinstone's History of India, Cowell's Edition. 1874, p. 266.

† *Op cit.* Vol. II, 1813, pp. 503-5.

Warren Hastings spoke of the modern Hindus as "gentle, benevolent, more susceptible of gratitude for kindness shown them than prompted to vengeance for wrongs inflict ed, and as exempt from the worst propensities of human passion as any people upon the face of the earth; they are faithful, and affectionate in service, and submissive to legal authority ....The precepts of their religion are wonderfully fitted to promote the best ends of society, its peace and good order"*

Bishop Heber spoke of them as "decidedly by nature, a mild, pleasing, and intelligent race; sober, parsimonious and, when an object is held out to them, most industrious and persevering," and as "constitutionally kind-hearted, industrious, sober, and peaceable." †

Sir Thomas Munro says: "In the higher branches of Science, in the knowledge of the theory and practice of good Government, and in an education, which by banishing prejudice—and superstition—opens the mind to receive instruction of every kind from every quarter, they are much inferior to Europeans. But if a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to either convenience or luxury, schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other, and above all, a treatment of the female sex full of confidence, respect and delicacy are among the signs which denote a civilised people—then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe, and if civilisation is to become an article of trade between England and India, I am convinced that England will gain by the import cargo."‡

MaxMuller thus writes: "during the last twenty years, however, I have had some excellent opportunities of watching a number of native scholars under circumstances where it is not difficult to detect a man's true character, I mean in literary work and, more particularly, in literary controversy. I have watched them carrying on such controversies both among themselves and with certain European scholars, and feel bound to say that,

* "History of British India" by Mill and Wilson, Vol. I, p. 372.

† "Narrative of a Journey through the upper Provinces of India," Vol. II, pp. 307, 270.

‡ "History of British India" by Mill and Wilson, Vol. I. p. 371.

with hardly one exception, they have displayed a far greater respect for truth, and a far more manly and generous spirit than we are accustomed to even in Europe and America. They have shown strength, but no rudeness; nay I know that nothing has surprised them so much as the coarse invective to which certain Sanskrit scholars have condescended, rudeness of speech being, according to their view of human nature, a safe sign not only of bad breeding, but of want of knowledge. When they were wrong, they have readily admitted their mistakes; when they were right, they have never sneered at their European adversaries. There have been, with few exceptions, no quibbling, no special pleading, no untruthfulness on their part, and certainly none of that low cunning of the scholar who writes down and publishes what he knows perfectly well to be false, and snaps his fingures at those who still value truth and self-respect more highly than victory or applause at any price. Here, too, we might possibly gain by the import cargo. Let me add that I have been repeatedly told by English merchants that commercial integrity stands higher in India than in any other country, and that a dishonoured bill is hardly known there." *

Influence of the doctrine of karma.

The tendency of the doctrine of *karma* † (the 'transmisgration of character") has been to promote contentment. The Hindu bears the "ills which flesh is heir to" with patience and

* "India, what can it teach us," Lecture II. It should be observed that just as the Europeans sometimes carry their combativeness to a fault, so the Hindus sometimes carry their peacefulness and forgiveness to a fault. They will yield when they should not, and often tamely and patiently suffer wrongs which Europeans will lose no time to resent. This is especially unfortunate as their rulers appreciate and respect fighting; and the justness of a cause is often measured by the sturdiness with which it is fought for.

† "Gautama held that after the death of any being, whether human or not there survived nothing at all but that being's Karma, the result, that is, of its mental and bodily actions. Every individual, whether

equanimity, because he believes them to be the result of transgressions in a previous life. He is reconciled to his fate, because he has brought himself to believe in its justice. If he finds, that other people have a larger share of the good things of the world than what they apparently deserve, he ascribes their good fortune to good works in some previous life. If he finds he has less than his deserts, he attributes his evil fortune to evil deeds in a former life.

Comparative absence of the military spirit among Hindus.

The Hindus have never been a fighting people. Their highest and most intellectual classes, the classes that led, and legislated, seldom took any part in warfare. In India, and outside India, the Hindus have exerted cosiderable influence; but the influence has generally been of a spiritual rather than of a physical nature, the influence of the mind upon the mind. They have more

human or divine, was the last inheritor and last result of the Karma of a long series of past individuals." (Rhys Davids, Hibbert Lectures, p. 92.)

"This fine body [the Súkshmasaríra], however, consists not only of the faculties of sensuous perception (indriyáni), of mind (manas), and of vital breath (mukhyapràna), but its character is likewise determined by former acts, by karman. In the Púrvamimámsá this continuity between acts and their consequences is called Apúrva, literally, that which did not exist before' but was brought about in this or in a former life." (Max Muller, "Theosophy, or Psychological Religion," p. 306.)

or less civilised large masses of people, such as the Dravidians and other aborigines, not by conquering or annexing their territories, but by settling amongst them and exerting the irresistible influence of intellectual and spiritual superiority.

From a very remote period, India has been divided into a number of small principalities. Megasthenes counted 118, and Hiouen Thsang, 76. The kings who were most powerful exacted submission from weaker

We have given above some of the distinctive traits in the national character of the Hindus; we need hardly say, there are black sheep among them as among other peoples. In this connection, however, the following observations by Major Evans Bell are very apposite:

"It will,however, be hardly necessary for me to quote contemporary and notorious cases of unveracity, and bribery, and cheating, in both high and low stations of our own countrymen both in England and in India, to show that as a nation we are not as yet justified in throwing the first stone..................We wash our dirty linen at home; but the foulest rags of India are carefully selected and ostentatiously displayed as the habitual costume of the most respectable class of natives."

"How indignant we are, how we vituperate the native character on discovering some petty pilfering or embezzlement on the part of our domestic servants. Surely, the lamentations of English house-keepers regarding the marvellous consumption of tallow candles, and the expansion of "kitchen stuff," the necessity of locking the tea-caddy, and keeping a key for the beer-barrel, must be pleasant jests; and the complaints of bachelors against lodging house-keepers for levying black mail on their coal and cold meat were never heard of before the performance of the farce of *Box and Cox*, and have no existence except in its scenes. Spoons never disappear mysterionsly except in India."

"The English in India." pp. 116-117, 161.

princes ; but such submission was in the majority of cases merely nominal. Even in the case of conquest, it is enjoined in the Manusamhitá, that "immediate security is to be assured to all by proclamation. The religion and laws of the country are to be respected, and as soon as time has been allowed for ascertaining that the conquered people are to be trusted, a prince of the royal family of the conquered country is to be placed on the throne, who should hold his kingdom as a dependency".*

The contact of the British and Hindu civilisations has affected the latter more than the former : reasons why.

Of the two civilisations which have been brought together in India, the British has been far less affected than the Hindu by the contact. The Hindus had greatly influenced the Mahomedans. The Mahomedans settled in the country, and as Orientals they had much in common with the Hindus. The bigoted among the Mahomedans might express contempt for the unbelievers, but they could not resist the influence of a civilisation, in many points superior to their own. They were gradually somewhat Hindu-

* Manu. VII. 201-203.

ised. They admitted the Hindus to the highest civil and military dignities under them. There were Hindu generals, Hindu prime-ministers and Hindu governors of large provinces, serving under Mahomedan Kings and Emperors. The intercourse between the Hindus and the Mahomedans was facilitated by a common language, in which the Hindu element was very strong. Several Mahomedan Emperors took to Hindu customs so strongly as to interdict beef. One of them—the Great Akbar—went so far as to observe Hindu ceremonies, and practically abjure Islam. Several of the Emperors and princes of Delhi formed matrimonial alliances with Hindu chiefs. The Emperors Jehangir and Shah Jehan were the offspring of Hindu mothers.

But the case is otherwise with the British. They do not settle in India. They look upon India as a country where, whether as merchents or manufacturers or Government servants, their prime concern is to make money. This is especially the case now-a-days when improved steam communication enables them to have a run home even on three months' leave. Besides, not a few of them would deny to the Hindus the rank of a civilized nation, and would scarcely dream of mixing with them on a footing of perfect equal-

ity * Yet, notwithstanding this studied distance, the Hindu contact has, to some extent, affected the English. But, the influence of the contact has been far greater on the Hindu than on the British; and our history will contain abundant illustrations of this influence. The reasons are obvious. The English civilisation is possessed of all the vitality of a young and progressive civilisation, and all the dignity and the prestige of being owned by a powerful people. English education is spreading far and wide in India. For one Englishman studying the literature and science of the Hindus, there are a

* This feeling characterised the civilised nations of antiquity, as it does those of the present day. What Alberuni said of the Hindus of his day applies *mutatis mutandis* to the latter: "They believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs * * * * According to their belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, and no created beings besides them, have any knowledge or Science whatever. Their haughtiness is such that, if you tell them of any science or scholar in Khorasan and Persia, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar." (Alberuni's "India" Translated by E. C. Sachau, Vol. I. p. 22.) It is often asserted that the chief hindrance to Europeans mixing freely, and on terms of equality, with the Hindus is the *Zenana* system of the latter. But those who have done away with it and approximated most to English social conditions do not generally appear to have had that equal treatment which one might have expected from the frequency and authoritativeness of such assertions.

thousand Hindus, studying the literature and science of the English. The educated Hindus often know more of English literature than they do of Hindu literature, more of Shakespeare and Milton, of Bentham and Mill, than they do of Kálidása and Bhababhúti, of Kapila and Gautama. Many of them write in the English language better than they do in their own vernaculars. They imbibe more or less the spirit of the English civilisation, though, it may often be, imperceptibly and unconsciously.

One of the main objects of this history will be to trace the changes due to the influence of the Western contact on the religious, socio-religious, social, industrial, and intellectual condition of the Hindus. If we have not devoted a separate Book to the moral condition, it is not owing to its unimportance. It is, indeed, the most important factor of civilisation; and we shall give as much of the history of Hindu morals as is capable of historical treatment, especially in connection with the history of the socio-religious and of the social condition. We shall here briefly dwell upon two recent moral changes which it will not be convenient to specially notice hereafter. A harmonious combination of all that is good in the industrial character of the Eng-

lish with all that is good in the spiritual character of the Hindus, of the energy, perseverance, and enterprise of the English with the gentleness, simplicity and benevolence of the Hindu, would produce a most estimable type of humanity. Though such combination is rare, a decided approach to it is observable in the lives of several Hindu gentlemen within the last half century as, for instance, in the life of the late Pandit Isvara Chandra Vidyáságar. *

Comparative absence of selfishness promoted by Hindu social organisation.

The tendency of a spiritual and non-industrial civilisation like that of the Hindus is to decrease the sense of self-interest, † and that of a material and industrial

* A Hindu of Hindus in many of the distinctive traits of his character, he had much of the good side of the Englishman in him. He was active, persevering, and resolute. He sought to remove the defects of the Hindu society with English energy. He acquired an immense fortune. He worked hard like an Englishman for it. But he spent it like a Hindu, not on his own comforts and luxuries or those of his family; but on charitable objects. Simple and self-sacrificing, he spent what he earned in relieving distress, in feeding, clothing and educating those that stood in need of food and clothes and education. His benevolence even involved him in debt. He was most catholic in his benevolence. Hindus and non-Hindus equally shared it. He would tend sick persons, suffering even from cholera and belonging to the lowest classes of society, with the care and tenderness of a father.

† The expression "self-interest" is here used in its usual narrow

civilisation like the Western is to increase it. The sense of self-interest is quite natural; man has it in common with other animals. But the object of progress should be to subordinate it to higher principles. Western civilisation has failed to secure this object. It has on the contrary, fostered a keen sense of self-interest, which may, without exaggeration be said, to be its motive impulse. In the Hindu, the sense of self-interest has been subdued to a remarkable, and according to Western ideas, to an undesirable extent. As head of the joint-family, he lives and earns not so much for himself and his own family (in the European sense) as for others more distantly or scarcely related to him.

It seems strange, that a society, in which the principal motive impulse to industry—the exclusive enjoyment of its fruits—is wanting, should have thrived for so many centuries. The ceremonial observances and entertainments of the Hindus are so ordered as to benefit all sections of the community. The Bráhman has no doubt precedence over the other castes and gets the lion's share of the gifts; and at the present day he

sense. There is no difference between altruism and an enlightened and broad sense of self-interest which identifies individual and national interests with the interests of humanity.

seldom fulfils the conditions which of yore entitled him to such gifts. But Bráhman, or Súdra, or even Mahomedan each has a prescriptive right in any entertainment that may take place in his neighbourhood. Whatever be the occasion, whether it be a wedding, or a Pújá, or a Sráddha, all ranks of the community from the highest to the lowest, from the richest to the poorest, have their share in it, almost as a matter of right. Guests come in by the hundred, and they have all to be attended to according to their social status. With regard to amusements they are also open to the public. The most popular form of amusement in Bengal is what is called *Yátrá*, or popular dramatic performances. The entire expense of the Yátrá is borne by the party in whose house it is held. Sometimes also it is got up by subscription. But, in either case, it is open to the public; there is no admission fee. In Hindu society the entertainers are not entertained. All their time and energies are exhausted in looking after their numerous and heterogeneous guests. The pleasure they derive is the pleasure of having done their duty towards the society in which they live. And one of the greatest hardships of excommunication, the worst social punishment which the Hindu dreads, is the deprivation of the pleasure of feeding others.

Selfishness is seen in its worst forms in the struggles for the acquisition of wealth. The caste-system, the joint-family system, and other causes have by minimising these struggles checked the growth of selfishness. No institution analogous to the work-house of England, and no law analogous to the Poor Law of England has ever been needed in India. Except during famines, private charity has always been sufficient to relieve local distress. The Hindus have always admitted foreigners into the heart of their country, and behaved towards them with an unsuspecting liberality which, in many cases, proved highly detrimental to their own interests. To any one acquainted with the history of India's connection with the European nations, many instances of the ill requital of Hindu kindness—which is sometimes construed as weakness or stupidity—will no doubt occur.

Increased sense of self-interest due to the contact of Western civilisation.

The influence of the Western contact is giving rise to an increased sense of self-interest in the Hindu society. Under existing conditions this is inevitable. It is however well, that we should clearly see and recognise the good points in the order of things which is passing away and try to retain them as far as possible. The educated community of the present day do not see the necessity of social and socio-religious entertainments

from which they cannot derive more unalloyed and direct pleasure than what satisfied their ancestors. The joint-family system has been seriously affected. It is incompatible with the increased sense of self-interest which has been fostered by English influence. In the new society, the poor have not that recognised position which they had in the old. Giving them alms is discountenanced by modern political economy, lest indiscriminate charity should encourage able-bodied idleness. The occasional feasts to which they used to be treated by the opulent are getting few and far between. The amusements to which they used to look forward of old are becoming obsolete.

Increased sense of individuality under Western influence.

Another important moral change due to Western contact, which is closely connected with the last, is an increased sense of individuality. The structure of the Hindu family, as well as of the Hindu society, has tended to suppress individuality. The senior member of a Hindu family is its head (kartá). There may be abler individuals among the juniors, but they must submit to the authority of the kartá. The Bráhmans are the highest class in Hindu society; they alone have the right of studying and interpreting the religious works

(Sástras); they alone have the right of cultivating their minds.* There may be gifted individuals among the other castes; but they are denied the opportunity of improving their natural parts. The tendency of the Hindu system has, on the whole, been to smother individuality, a tendency which has become greatly intensified with the decay of Hindu civilisation in the Puránic period.

The spread of English education, and the example of of English society have now brought the individual into greater prominence than before. He is beginning to feel, that his existence is not solely, or chiefly, for his family or his society. Whatever his caste may be, he can recieve the highest education which the country gives, and obtain the highest honours which the Government bestows upon his countrymen. An increased sense of freedom, which is produced by that of individuality, is at the root of many of the changes which we shall have to record in our history. It is this sense which has emboldened the Neo-Hindus to interpret the Sástras in the light of their reason, and to inaugurate important social reforms; and it is also this sense which is leading to important changes in Hindu literature and various other matters.

* As we shall see hereafter, matters were different in ancient times.

Arts and manufactures in the Vedic period,

From a very ancient time, India has been noted for her arts and manufactures. The progress made in them in the earlier Vedic period, appears to have been by no means insignificant. In the Rigveda there is constant mention of axes, spears, knives and swords.* The Ribhus are spoken of as having shamed Tvashtri by the superiority of their skill in the working of wood and metal. The arts of boat-building, roap-making, and of working in leather are frequently alluded to.†

There are frequent references to coats of mail, as also to elegant and expensive garments. There are descriptions of divine palaces with thousand gates and thousand pillars, and of the jewellery of the deities, which though, no doubt, hyperbolical could not have been given by the Rishis unless they had seen something of the like.

in the Buddhist-Hindu period.

During the period of the Manusamhitá, the progress of social evolution gave rise to a variety of arts and manufactures unknown to the early Aryan settlers. The A´ryas of the time

* R. V. I, 127, 3; VI, 3, 5; X, 53, 9; &c.
† R. V. I, 85, 5; I, 116, 3; VIII, 42, 3, &c.

of the Manusamhitá used vessels made not only of copper, iron, brass, pewter, tin and lead but also of gold and silver. * Household utensils made of leather, cane, horn, shells and ivory were not uncommon. † From the frequent mention of gems and ornaments made of the precious metals, as well as from the tax levied upon them they seem to have been in no small demand.‡ Perfumes, honey, iron, indigo, lac, medical substances, wax, sugar, spices &c. formed some of the ordinary articles of trade. §

There are references not only to clothes made of cotton and jute, but also to silk and woollen manufactures.|| Carriages, waggons, and boats are mentioned among ordinary conveyances. Trade was chiefly inland. But from the law relating to bottomry in the Manusamhitá and other allusions to navigation, it is evident that it was not so confined.

The material condition of the people under the Moguls.

The material condition of the people under the Mogul Empire, must, on the whole have been one of ease and comfort.

* Manusamhita V. 112-114.
† Manusamhita V. 119, 121.
‡ Manusamhita VII. 130.
§ Manusamhita X. 86-89.
|| Manusamhita X. 87; V. 120 &c.

The following table gives the wages of some labourers during the reign of Akbar *

	Rs.	A.	P.		Rs.	A.	P.
Carpenters	0	2	$9\frac{3}{5}$	to	0	0	$9\frac{3}{5}$
Bricklayers	0	1	$4\frac{4}{5}$	to	0	1	$2\frac{2}{5}$
Bamboo-cutters	0	0	$9\frac{3}{5}$				
Thatchers	0	1	$2\frac{2}{5}$				
Water-carriers	0	1	$2\frac{2}{5}$	to	0	0	$9\frac{3}{5}$

The following are the average prices of some of the commonest articles of consumption during the same reign † :—

	Rs.	A.	P.		Rs.	A.	P.
Wheat *per man* ...	0	4	$9\frac{3}{5}$	Ghee *per man* ...	2	10	0
Lentils „ ...	0	4	$9\frac{3}{5}$	Oil „ ...	2	0	0
Barley „ ...	0	3	$2\frac{2}{5}$	Milk „ ...	0	10	0
Millet „ ...	0	2	$4\frac{4}{5}$	Brown Sugar „ ...	1	6	4
Sathi rice „ ...	0	8	0	Salt „ ...	0	6	$4\frac{4}{5}$
Zirhi rice „ ...	1	0	0	Onions „ ...	0	2	$4\frac{4}{5}$
Moth Dal „ ...	0	4	$9\frac{3}{5}$	Turmeric „ ...	0	4	0
Wheat flour (Coarse) ...	0	6	0	Silahati cloth, per yard ...	0	1	$7\frac{1}{5}$
Mung Dal ...	0	7	$2\frac{2}{5}$	Blankets, coarse per piece	0	4	0

The monthly dietetic requirements of a flour-eating average adult labourer would be :—

			Price in Akbar's time		
	Seers		Rs.	A.	P.
Flour ...	25	... ...	0	3	9
Dal ...	5	... ...	0	0	$7\frac{1}{2}$
Ghee ...	1	... ...	0	1	$0\frac{1}{2}$
Salt ...	1	... ...	0	0	$2\frac{4}{5}$
		Total ...	0	5	$7\frac{4}{5}$

* *Ain-i-Akbari*, Blochmann's Translation, Vol. I., p. 225.

† *Ain-i-Akbari*, Blochmann's Translation, Vol. I., pp. 62-63, 95-96.

Labourers.

Making allowance for condiments and other little things, an adult labourer could live comfortably during the reign of Akbar on six annas per month. Taking his family to consist of five members (himself, his wife, and three children), he alone being the earning member, we may take one rupee and four annas to cover his monthly expenses on account of food for the whole family. An average unskilled labourer, like a water-carrier, in Akbar's time would earn one rupee and fourteen annas per month. Thus he would have left a margin of ten annas to spend on clothing and luxuries,—a large amount considering the purchasing power of the rupee at the time.

Artisans.

The condition of the artisans must have been more prosperous than in any previous period. This prosperity was due partly to increased commerce with Europe, and partly to the taste for luxuries created by the Mahomedans. The doubling of the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco de Gama at the close of the 15th century, marks an epoch in the history of India. That event had a remarkable influence on the development of her foreign trade. Various costly gold, silk and woollen stuffs were introduced during the Mahomedan period. Satin velvet, brocaded velvet, and broad cloth from Persia and Europe, were amongst these.

Indian industries a century ago.

The indigenous velvets and satins however held their own against those imported from abroad. Besides raw produce, such as indigo, spices and sugar, India exported to Europe manufactured cotton and silk. These manufactures must have given employment to numerous artisans. The following are the component parts of the amount of sales by the East Indian Company in England, reduced to an annual average, in the seventeen years ending 1808-9 : *

Piece goods	£1,539,478
Organzine silk	... £13,443
Pepper	... £195,461
Saltpetere	... £180,066
Spices	... £112,596
Sugar, Indigo	... £272,442
Coffee	... £6,624

Muslins and calicoes used to be manufactured in various parts of India, especially in Bengal and the northern part of the coast of Coromandel. Dacca was the chief seat of the muslin manufacture. The Northern Circars and the neighbourhood of Masulipatam were the most distinguished for chintzes, calicoes and ginghams. The artisans engaged in the manufacture of cotton, silk, and wool were mostly, as their descendants still are, Hindus ; and the expansion of the European trade during

* H. Murray's "Discoveries and Travels," Vol. II p. 375,

the Mogul rule must have greatly increased their prosperity. The historian of Firuz Shah speaks "of the happy state of the ryots, the goodness of their homes and furniture, and the general use of gold and silver ornaments by their women. . . . . He says, amongst other things, that every ryot had a good bedstead and a neat garden."

Nicolo di Conti who travelled about A.D. 1420, describes the banks of the Ganges as covered with cities and beautiful gardens. He ascended the Ganges till he came to what he calls a most famous and powerful city named Maurazia abounding in gold, silver and pearls. * Baber, who came to India in the beginning of the 16th century, speaks of it as a rich and noble country, abounding in gold and silver and is astonished at the swarming population, and the innumerable workmen in every trade and profession.

European travellers on the material condition of the people under Moslem rule—Conti.

Sebastian Manrique who travelled about 1612, mentions the magnificent fabrics of cotton of Bengal exported to all the countries of the East. He describes Dacca, then the capital of Bengal, to be frequented by people of every nation

Manrique.

* Murray, *op. cit.* p. 12.

and to contain upwards of 200,000 souls. He travelled from Lahore to Multan through a country abounding in wheat, rice, vegetables, and cotton. The villages, he tells us, are numerous, and contain excellent inns. Tatta in Sind, where he stayed for a month, is described by him to be extremely rich. The country round is of exuberant abundance, particularly in wheat, rice, and cotton, in the manufacture of which at least two thousand looms are employed. Some silk is also produced, and also a beautiful species of leather, variegated with fringes and ornaments of silk. *

Mandeslo.

Mandeslo, a German, who travelled about 1638, found Broach to be a populous city, almost filled with weavers, who manufactured the finest cotton cloth in the province of Guzerat. On his way from Broach to Ahmedabad, he passed through Brodera, another large town of weavers and dyers. He was much struck with the splendour and beauty of Ahmedabad, the chief manufactures of which were those of silk and cotton. Cambay appeared to him a larger city than Surat, and carried on an extensive trade. He found Agra, then the capital of India, to be twice as large as Ispahan; a man in one

* Murray. *op. cit.* p. 99 *et seq.*

day could not ride round the walls. The streets were handsome and spacious; some, of more than a quarter of a league, were vaulted above for the convenience of shopkeepers, who had their goods exposed there for sale.*

Bernier.

Bernier, who resided for some time in India about the middle of the 17th century, writes deprecatingly of the wealth of the people. He admits, however, "that India is like an abyss, in which all the gold and silver of the world are swallowed up and lost; such vast quantities are continually imported thither out of Europe, while none ever returns;" and "that vast quantities of the precious metals are employed not only in earrings, nose-rings, bracelets of hands and feet, and other ornaments, but in embroidering and embellishing the clothes alike of the Omrahs and of the meanest soldiers." †

One of the first effects of the contact of English industrialism under English rule was the ruin of the indigenous industries of India. The hand-made manufactures of India could not long compete with the machine-made manufactures of England. Among the

* Murray, *op, cit,* pp. 173 *et seq.*

† Murray. *op. cit.* p. 187.

Hindus, the artisan castes used to look after their industries; the weaving castes looked after the cotton manufactures; the potters took care of pottery; tanning was in charge of the *muchis* and *châmârs*; and so forth. The Hindu community was, in one sense, a very well-ordered one; unaffected by ambition, *contented with his lot, ignorant of every thing but his own calling—everybody was happy in his own sphere. He had plenty to eat, and had a large share of comforts also. The struggle for existence, and the restlessness and discontent, which are the inevitable consequences of such struggles, were then unknown. Each excelled in his own handicraft—the potter in pottery, the weaver in weaving, the dyer in dyeing; and he earned enough from his trade to make himself comfortable. But the good, old times have passed away. We may sigh for them, but they will never return. We must move with the times or perish. The progress of natural science in the western world has effected a revolution in industrial methods:

Causes of the ruin of Indian industries.

* Traders and artisans have always occupied a low position in the Hindu social system In the Manusmhitá such respectable people as oil-manufacturers are placed in the same category as publicans and brothel-keepers; and physicians, goldsmiths, carpenters, singers, tailors, black-smiths, and dyers are classed, as regards purity of food prepared by them, with perjurers, thieves, and adulteresses! Manu IV. 84, 2102—16.

The day of mere manual skill is gone by. This revolution took the Hindus by surprise; they were not prepared for it; they were not given the time to prepare themselves for it; and the result is that they are simply paralysed. The caste system had no doubt aided progress in the earlier stages of their civilisation; it has also served to maintain some kind of order for centuries since the decay of that civilisation. But caste did so at the sacrifice of progress—progress such as it is understood now in Europe and America. It was not to be expected that illiterate weavers, or illiterate dyers, or illiterate miners, would apply the scientific methods of modern industries to their professions. Not being able to do so, they have gone to the wall.

The absence of a protective tariff of any sort not only contributed to the ruin of indigenous industries, but also placed serious difficulties in the way of their revival. A high official of the Government of Bengal says: * "Another suggestion of even more practical character is that the Government of this country should afford assistance to indigenous industries by protection. We were told in a recent

* Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, Lecture on Technical Education at the Bethune Society (Calcutta).

official report, with an air of exultation, that India sets an example to the whole civilised world in the matter of free trade. But is it to the advantage of India itself that it should do so? This is a wide question. * * * Different authorities will have different opinions on it, but my brief analysis of the decay of Indian manufactures will have prepared you to expect my own personal conclusion, that the time is ripe for a careful consideration of current convictions on this subject." †

Effects of the extinction of indigenous industries;

The all but utter extinction of our industries has ruined our artisan classes. Down to the commencement of the present century we used to make enough clothes, not only to meet our own demands, but also to export a good portion of them. Our export trade then consisted mainly of manufactured cotton; now it consists mainly of raw produce. In the beginning of the present century

† Railways also appear to have contributed, to some extent, to the extinction of indigenous industries. They have added greatly to the comforts of travelling. They have helped to mitigate the horror of famines. But they have also partly helped to cause them. For, by carrying European wares cheaply into the interior they have been one of the contributory causes of the destruction of indigenous industries, which means increased pressure upon land.

India exported to England piece-goods worth more than a million and-a-half pounds; in 1892 we imported over twenty eight millions worth of manufactured cotton. The profits of manufacture which a century ago remained in the country and enriched it, now swell the ever-increasing drain to Europe. The greater majority of the artisan classes who once formed large flourishing communities have been driven to earn their subsistence as agriculturists or labourers. *

Large towns with urban populations have dwindled into inconsiderable villages. It has been estimated that nearly ninety per cent of our population is now dependent, directly or indirectly, upon agriculture. But, the extent of cultivable waste-land, in proportion to the population, is rather small. Consequently, as population has been increasing † and becoming more and more largely agricultural,

increased pressure upon land;

* Mr. Cotton, in the lecture from which we have quoted above says: "Not a year passes in which the commissioners and district officers do not bring to the notice of Government that the manufacturing classes from all parts of the country are becoming impoverished. ...... Agriculture is everywhere expanding at the expense of manufacturing industry."

† In many parts, the increase, as ascertained by the last census, has been small. The total increase in Bengal has been 7·3 per cent. "But," observes the Census Commissioner, "if we exclude that part of it due

the pressure upon land has been gradually increasing. The time is not far distant when it will fail to meet the enhanced demand upon it, unless its food-growing capacity increases. That with improved methods this capacity will, to some extent, increase, there can be no doubt. But the present prospect is not very cheering. The agricultural experiments which have been carried on by Government have not yet led to any large practical results. Dr. Voelcker, a renowned agriculturist, who was recently engaged by Government to report upon the possible directions in which our agriculture may be improved, says after carefully inspecting nearly every part of India*:—"I unhesitatingly dispose of the ideas which have been erroneously entertained, that the ryot's cultivation is primitive and backward, and say, that nearly all the attempts made in the past to teach him have failed, because he understands far better than his would-be teachers the particular circumstances under which he has to pursue his calling." With regard to deep ploughing, Dr. Voelcker says: "Though there may be instances where deep ploughing would be effectual, I believe that in the great majority of cases the native system of

to more accurate enumeration, it probably does not exceed 6 per cent, and may be less." (Census of India. Vol. III).

* Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England. No. 5, 1891.

ploughing is the one best adapted to the conditions; and that were a furrow-turning plough used, the result would be to lose a great deal of the precious moisture." So the out-look for our agricultural classes is not very bright. Large numbers of impoverished artisans have swelled their ranks, and struggle with them to earn a subsistence from land. Sir James Caird, who came to India as Famine Commissioner in 1878, says: "Three fourths of the cultivators have no capital. In a good year they have enough for their simple wants; in a year of abundance their banker has something to apply in reduction of their debt; in an unfavourable year they live very poorly, and partly by help of their credit; in a year of famine that is withdrawn, and they have no means left of employing labour, and the poorest of them and their labourers are equally destitute." * That the struggle for existence among them is being gradually intensified is indicated by many symptoms. It is the impression of many well-experienced men, that the masses of our people are deteriorating in physique, and that they do not get sufficient sustenance to resist the attacks of fever. No doubt, here and there, we have flourishing,

condition of the cultivators,

* "India, the land and the people." pp. 212-213.

well-to-do agricultural communities, as in Eastern Bengal. But over the greater portion of India—in North-Western Bengal, Behar, the North-Western Provinces, Madras, and Bombay—the agricultural classes are far from prosperous; indeed, they are already much depressed. One season of drought is enough to produce widespread distress.

of the labourers.

Our labouring classes have also been largely recruited from the artisan population. They, too, are very hard pressed. It is true, their wages have increased but not in the same ratio as the price of food-grains. Three centuries ago, in the time of Akbar, we learn from the *Ain i-Akbari*, that the wages of unskilled labourers, such as bamboo-cutters, &c. was $9\frac{3}{8}$ pies per day. But wheat then sold for about 5 annas per maund, and coarse rice for 8 annas per maund. Since then wages have increased three or even four-fold, but the prices for wheat and for coarse rice have increased sevenfold,* so that labourers in

* The annual Resolution on the Administration Report of the Patna Division says : "Though the price of food-grains has, owing to the opening out of railways and roads and other causes, risen greatly in this Division in the past twenty years, there yet appears to be no corresponding rise in the wages of unskilled agricultural labour. The wage of a common cooley is said to be now as it was eighty years ago, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas a day."

"In Upper Hindusthan under Ala-ud-din (A. D. 1303-1315), the officially fixed rate of barley was a little under six pence per hundred-

the time of Akbar had the means to be nearly twice as comfortable as they are now. They must now go without not only the comforts which they then enjoyed, but, in many cases, without some of the bare necessaries of life also. Thus we find that our artisan classes have been well nigh ruined, and that the struggle for existence among the agricultural and the labouring classes has been gradually intensified to a very serious extent. The death-rate appears to have been increasing. In 1880, it was 20·98 per 1,000; in 1891, it was 28·891.* No doubt there is always the suspicion, that that the registration may not have been efficient, and that the figures may not

weight, and of peas four pence half penny a hundredweight. In the latter part of the century, under Firoz Shah (1351-1385), the price of barley remained exactly the same, viz, six pence per hundredweight [Mr. Thomar's Pathan Kings p. 283]. But no sooner did the tide of European trade set in, than the value of silver fell, and at the time of Akbar (A. D. 1556-1605), the price of barley rose to 9½*d* per hundredweight. The price of barley in the same localities is now, on an average, about three and six pence per hundredweight retail, or seven times what it was throughout the fourteenth century." Hunter's "Orissa." Vol. I (1872), p. 328.

* The following extract is made from the Parliamentary Blue-book exhibiting the moral and material condition of India during 1889-90 (pp. 46-47): "From all the chief diseases the deaths were more numerous than in 1888. Cholera gave rise to 471,017 deaths, being in the proportion of 2·15 per 1000 of population against 268, 847, or 1·39 in 1888.....Smallpox was more prevalent in 1889 than in the preceding year, and the deaths rose from 87, 914 or 0·40 per 100 to 125, 453, or 0·64.........To fevers were ascribed 3, 486, 448 deaths equal to 18·01 per 1000 of population as

be reliable. Still, so great an increase as 8 per thousand in 10 years can scarcely be due entirely to inefficient registration in previous years.

The middle class,

The condition of the middle class is no better than that of the mass of the people; probably it is worse. But few of them can enter the higher grades of the Government services.* Industrial or commercial occupations engage, as yet, but a small fraction of them. Old customs, like the joint-family system still continue to impose upon them very heavy pecuniary responsibilities. New customs have arisen which add seriously to their responsibilities; some of these customs may be good, but they add to encumbrances all the same. They have to work according to

compared with 3, 337·076 or 17·24 showing an increase in 1889 of 149, 362............The total number of deaths returned from bowel complaints amounted to 217,993 or 1·39 per thousand of population as compa red with 246, 339, or 1·27 in 1889."

The following figures show the death-rate from 1880 to 1891 : 1880, 20·98; 1881, 24·05; 1882, 23·93; 1883, 23·17; 1884, 26·44; 1885, 26·12; 1886, 25·34; 1887, 28·35; 1888, 25·74; 1889, 27·98; 1890, 29·99; 1891, 28·09.

* The following extract from the Proceedings of the House of Commons (1891) will show the nature of the appointments held by the people of India.

"In answer to Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Curzon said, the proportions of Europeans, Eurasians, and Indians in the Covenanted and Uncovenanted Services of India on March 31, 1886, at salaries varying from 50,000 and more rupees to 1,000 rs. were as follows :—salaries of 50,000

the exacting methods of Western civilisation; indeed, they are called upon to work like an Englishman, but without an Englishman's food, without an Englishman's habits, and without an Englishman's reward. The cost of living has increased, but not the means to meet the increased cost. Meat diet is too expensive for the majority of them; milk and various preparations of milk, which form the chief articles of nutrition in Hindu diet, have become very dear. So our middle classes have to work harder than ever upon diet less nutritious than they were used to in days gone by. Without any scope for legitimate ambition in the Government services, or in commercial and industrial occupations, they swell the ranks of discontented clerks. No wonder they grow up weak in body, and weak in mind; no wonder that such fell diseases as diabetes, are counting victims among them by scores. Western education is still confined to an inconsiderable portion of our population. There is still a very wide field for it. But the

rupees and upwards, 26 Europeans, 1 native; 40,000 rs. to 50,000 rs., 47 Europeans, 3 natives; 30,000 rs. to 40,000 rs. 125 Europeans; 20,000 rs. to 30,000 rs., 346 Europeans, 3 Eurasians, 2 natives; 10,000 rs. to 20,000 rs., 951 Europeans, 12 Eurasians, 40 natives: 5,000 rs. to 10,000 rs., 2078 Europeans, 111 Eurasians, 446 natives; 2,500 rs to 5,000 rs., 1,334 Europeans, 1,647, Eurasians, 545 natives; 1,000 rs. to 2,500 rs., 2097 Europeans, 1,963 Eurasians, 6,915 natives."

struggle for existence among the educated classes is already beginning to be very keenly and very widely felt. Thus we find that there is scarcely a section of our population that may be said to be prosperous. Our artisans, our peasants, our labourers, our educated classes, all are sunk in poverty.* The outlook for them all is equally gloomy.

Industrial expansion the chief remedy for increasing distress.

The Government services can offer only a few drops of water among thirsty millions ; can afford relief to a small fraction only of our distressed population. The only remedy that is likely to be of very wide application, that is likely to afford substantial relief to all classes of our people, is the development of our industries. It is industries alone that can relieve the distress of the mass of the people by lightening the pressure upon land ; it is industries alone that can relieve the distress of our middle classes by affording them openings other than clerkships. The Government and the people are alike beginning to understand this ; and in the fourth and fifth Books of our history we shall dwell upon the steps which have already been taken by the Hindus in this direction. Two associations were established in 1891,

* The average annual income of an Indian has been variously estimated at twenty to twenty seven rupees.

one in Bengal and the other in Bombay, with the special object of the promotion of Indian industries. The Industrial Association of Western India of which the head quarters are at Poona, has for its object the discussion of economic subjects relating to India and the encouragement of the growth of Indian industries. "The reorganization of credit, establishment of agencies for the production and distribution of native goods, encouragement of a spirit of individual and collective enterprize in the starting, conduct or maintenance of industries or industrial institutions are objects which fall within the sphere of work which the Association has taken upon itself. The means relied upon in securing these objects are the holding of Annual Conferences, the publication of a Quarterly Review, the affiliation of the Association with public bodies started with similar objects in this and in foreign countries; the holding of exhibitions or their promotion, the establishment of Commercial and Industrial Museums; and such other matters generally as are calculated to help the Association."

The objects of the Industrial Association of Bengal, of which the head quarters are in Calcutta, are stated to be :—(1) to adopt measures for the spread of Technical education; (2) to collect information about existing Indian arts and manufactures and watch over their

interests; (3) to point out new openings for industrial enterprise; and (4) to facilitate the establishment of new industries. These objects are at present carried out by holding public meetings at which papers bearing upon Indian Industries are read and popular lectures upon industrial subjects are delivered; and by exhibiting articles of indigenous manufacture.

There is considerable room for the expansion of many industries. There is no reason why Indians should not be able to make at least the greater portion of the cotton articles they require. The iron industry also has a promising future before it. There are also various other industries, such as coal, petroleum, soap, match, paper, pottery, sugar-refining, dyeing and tanning, which are likely to afford scope for enterprise.

The principal means by which industrial development, under present conditions, may be effected are Technical Education and joint-stock organisation. The education which the Hindus have received hitherto have mainly been what may be called literary education. Many of them can speak the English language well, a few better even than many members of the House of Commons. They can turn out readable and entertaining novels and dramas, and able disquisitions on religion and philosophy; but, they have been very slow to follow, especially

in the Bengal Presidency, the lead of the Europeans in the development of the resources of their country. The fact is, they have not had the necessary training. They see around them Europeans exploiting the mineral and other resources of their country, starting mills and factories, and they are bewildered. The chief good the mines, the mills, and the factories do them is in the direction of affording employment to labourers among the lower classes. They cannot well develop the resources of their country when they do not well know what those resources are; they have not had the needful education. Ask our graduates where coal and petroleum are to be found in India? Under what conditions can they be worked to profit? How is iron smelted? How can soap be manufactured from indigenous materials?—Not one in a thousand will be able to give anything like a satisfactory answer. Many there are who will intelligently discuss abstruse questions of philosophy; who will make apt quotations from Shakespeare, Milton, and a host of other poets; who have mastered English history better than many Englishmen; but few there are who know anything about the vast resources of their country, and how they can be utilised and developed. Technical education is indeed very badly needed in this country. The principle of co-operation is also of the

utmost importance in connection with industrial undertakings. No industry now-a-days is likely to be remunerative unless started on a large scale, which means large outlay. India is a very poor country. Still by joint stock organisation sufficient capital could be raised for the successful starting of many large industries. A very good beginning has already been made in this direction. The recent establishment of many manufacturing industries on joint-stock principles is a very hopeful sign. We have no doubt more companies will be gradually formed. It is possible, that in a few cases the success at the commencement may not quite come up to our expectations. But it is better far that it should be so,—nay, that we should even have a few failures—than that we should make no endeavour to march in the path of progress.

We shall, for the sake of convenience, group the non-Agricultural industries under two heads: *Art-Industries,* such as painting, engraving, modelling, etc., that is to say, industries which are carried on without the help of steam or machinery except of the simplest kind, and which have a remote, if any, connection with natural science; and *Mining* and *Manufacturing Industries,* which, as carried on now, are more or less dependent upon some branch or other of natural science. From what we have already said, it will be apparent

that it is the latter and not the art-industries that require to be specially developed. There is not much room for expansion in the petty industries, such as carpentry, tailoring, shoe-making, etc. It is not the making up of cloth, so much as the manufacture of cloth, on a large scale, that is more particularly wanted in this country. Few people are in a position to use made-up clothes at all, far less clothes of fine cut or nice fit, or boots and shoes of approved shape and fashionable make. Of furniture of any kind there is but little demand. Our wants in these directions are at best extremely limited; and they are, we think, well enough supplied at present. Whatever field there is for enterprise in them is being occupied, as is witnessed in Calcutta by the tailor's shops of Chitpore-road, and the cabinet-ware houses of Bow Bazar.

Indian art.

With regard to Indian Art, its fate is doomed. Any attempt to revive it, at least on a large scale, is destined to fail. A Society has been lately formed in England under very high auspices for the encouragement and preservation of Indian art. "It purposes to further these objects by encouraging the artisans in every province of the country to continue in the practice of their hereditary handicrafts, notwithstanding the pressure of the commercial competition

to which they are being subjected through the great development of trade between the West and the East, and the inducements that are often held out to them to copy unsuitable and incongruous Western designs." The Society also endeavours "to extend among European purchasers and patrons a taste for genuine Indian Art work," and does its "utmost to enlist the sympathy and support of the Hindu and Mohomedan princes of India in preserving the local Arts and decorative Handicrafts of their several states." It should be observed, however, that the demand for high-class Indian art is daily decreasing, and will continue to decrease as the price of labour rises. In these days of cheap imitations, genuine art-productions, requiring a vast amount of labour, are not likely to hold their own. Cheap cloth, cheap iron, cheap paper, cheap glass, cheap soap, in short, cheap necessaries of life, are what India particularly wants ; and these will, therefore, command a large sale. It is the larger industries, involving scientific methods and appliances, such as cotton, iron, paper, &c., which are specially needed. With cheap labour and raw materials in abundance, there is every reason to expect, that such industries will be remunerative.

BOOK I.

RELIGIOUS CONDITION.

CHAPTER I.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF HINDUISM FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE BRITISH RULE.

Division into periods: Vedic, Buddhist-Hindu, Puránic, and Recent Hindu.

THE history of Hinduism, like geology—if we may be allowed to compare two subjects so widely different—is divisible into four periods which are separated from one another by more or less well defined gaps, and in the chronology of which accuracy of dates is impossible. They may be named—Vedic, Buddhist-Hindu, Puránic, and Recent Hindu. The Vedic period extending from about B.C. 1500 to about B.C. 500 comprises the history of Vedic Hinduism or Vaidikism. It was pre-eminently the period of Indo-Aryan influence. In the Buddhist-Hindu period (B.C. 500 to A.D. 700*), arose two

* From about the time of Sákyasimha, to about the time of Samkara, the great Hindu reformer.

synchronous though somewhat dissimilar systems, Buddhism and post-Vedic Hinduism. It was the period of what may be called non-Aryan influence, including under the term "non-Aryan" those of the aboriginal tribes who were incorporated with the Aryan society on the condition of their occupying the lowest place in it as well as the Scythians or Turanians * who strove for political ascendancy in northern India from about the first century B. C. to the third century A. D. The Puránic period extending from the eighth to the beginning of the present century is the period of what may be called sectarian Hinduism, that is Hinduism split up into a number of sects. It may be called the period of Mahomedan influence. We are living in the Recent Hindu period, the period of British influence, which within the last half a century has seen the foundation laid of a system which we shall designate Neo-Hinduism.

Post-Vedic different from Vedic Hinduism.

Taking a general view of these four systems, we find the passage from the Puránic to the Recent Hindu, and from the Buddhist-Hindu to the Puránic system to be more gradual than the passage from the

* "They are best known by the name of *Yueh-chi,* this being the name by which they are called in Chinese chronicles....They are described as of pink and white complexion and as shooting from horseback; and as there was some similarity between their Chinese name *Yueh-chi* and the *Gothi* or *Goths*, they were identified by Remusat with those German tribes, and by others with the *Getae*, the neighbours of the Goths. Tod went even a step further, and traced the Játs in India and the Rájputs back to the *Yueh-chi* and *Getae*."—*Max Muller's "India, what can it teach us.*" (1892) p. 86.

Vedic to the Buddhist-Hindu; or, in geological language, the unconformity between the two last named systems is far more strongly marked than that between the Buddhist-Hindu and the Puránic or between the Puránic and the Recent Hindu systems. The gods and goddesses and the cults of the Hinduism of the Buddhist-Hindu as well as of the Puránic period are very dissimilar to the gods and goddesses and the cults of Vaidikism; very dissimilar, yet not quite different. Indra, Agni, Varuna, Soma, Savitri, Parjanya, Ushas and the Maruts, which are the familiar deities of the Vedic system, are scarcely known in post-Vedic Hinduism. The Vedic system knows no temples, images or pilgrimages; whereas they may, without exaggeration, be said to be the very essence of later Hinduism. The sacrificial rites of the Vedic worship are scarcely known in the worship of post-Vedic Hinduism. The grand Vedic sacrifices, such as the Vájapeya, the Rájasúya, and the Asvamedha are scarcely heard of at the present day. The principal ideas and doctrines of each period of the history of Hinduism may be compared to the characteristic animal forms of geological periods. The idea of sacrifice, of a kind of bargain with the deities, was the characteristic idea of the early Vedic cults. "Man needs things which the god possesses, such as rain, light, warmth, and health, while the god is hungry and seeks offerings from man: There is giving and receiving on both sides." * In the later Vedic Period, the doctrine

* Barth "The Religions of India," (London, 1882) p. 36. "The liturgical formulæ are at times very clear in this respect; for example,

of Jnána, the knowledge of the Supreme Soul, sprung into existence, and, to some extent, superseded the doctrine of sacrifice. Both of these doctrines have survived to the present day, but in diminutive forms, like the existing puny progeny of some gigantic animals of older geologic periods. The ruling doctrine of post-Vedic Hinduism is that of *Bhakti*, * faith or love. It attained considerable development in the Puránic period, chiefly in connection with the worship of the various manifestations of Vishnu, especially Ráma, Krishna and Chaitanya.† The idea of *Avatáras* or incarnations of the Divinity is also a distinguishing feature of post-Vedic Hinduism in contradistinction to Vaidikism in which it is altogether unknown.‡ This idea has had a very firm hold on the popular mind; and numerous little local *avatáras* still appear from time to time in all parts of India; the

Taitt. samh. VI. 4, 5, 6, : 'Does he wish to do harm (to an enemy,) Let him say (to Sùrya) : Strike such an one; afterwards will I pay thee the offering. And Súrya desiring to obtain the offering strikes him."

* It is not unknown in the Vedic system In the Rigveda, oblations and prayers are said to be useless without faith, Sraddhá. "Whatever sacrifice, penance, or alms is performed, and whatever act is done, without faith, that is called *asat*, O son of Prithá, and is of no account in this life or after death." (Bhagavatgítá, XVII, 28. Translation by J. Davies, London 1889, p. 165).

† In the system of Chaitanya, the great prophet of Bengal, Bhakti has five forms, *Sánti*, quietism, *Dásya*, surrender of one's self to the service of God, *Sákhya*, friendship, *Vátsalya*, filial affection, and *mádhurya*, passionate attachment for the Deity.

‡ Krishna says in the Bhagavatgítá: "For whenever piety decays, O Son of Bharata, and impiety is in the ascendant, then I produce myself. For the protection of good men, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the re-establishment of piety, I am born from age to age." iv. 7, 8. (Translation by J. Davies, London, 1889, p. 59).

latest case of apotheosis to our knowledge being that of Paramhamsa Rámkrishna in Bengal a few years ago.

Continuity between Vedic and post-Vedic Hinduism.

We have said, that the deities and cults of post-Vedic Hinduism are dissimilar to the deities and cults of Vaidikism, but not quite different Notwithstanding the salient points of difference just noted there is a continuity between them ; and the belief of the Hindus that their religion is based upon Vaidikism is not groundless. The Brahmans still recite every morning the celebrated Gáyatrí found in the Rigveda.* The *samskáras* or Sacramental observances of the higher castes are still those of the Vedic system.† The two central figures of the Hindu pantheon, Rudra and Vishnu, are found in the Rigveda though as yet in a subordinate position, and without those myths and legends which form such a large portion of the later Hindu literature ; and the leading tenets of the Upanishads or the Vedánta are discernible in almost every phase of modern Hinduism.

* "Let us meditate on the sacred light of that divine Sun, that he may illuminate our minds."

† These are usually ten in number: 1. Garbhádhána, a rite performed to procure conception. 2. Pumsavana has for its object the bringing about the birth of a male child. 3. Símantonnayana, which consists in parting the hair of a pregnant woman. 4. Játakarma, the birth ceremony. 5. Námakarana, the name giving ceremony. 6. Nishkramana, a cermony performed when the child is first taken out to be shown to the sun or the moon. 7. Annaprásana, when the child is fed with rice for the first time. 8. Chudákarana, when only a tuft of hair is left on the top of the head. 9. Upanayana, Initiation. 10. Viváha, Marriage.

The Rigveda,

its deities in their natural and super-natural characters.

After their dispersion from their primitive home, the Indo-Aryans at first settled on the banks of the Kabul and the Indus, and thence gradually spread south-eastward. While still located in the Punjab and its vicinity they were in the habit of chanting hymns to their deities ; and these hymns have been preserved in a most remarkable collection—the Rigveda. * Portions of the hymns read like idyls of no mean order. But, there is something which distinguishes these compositions from poetry—something supernatural and infinite behind the natural and finite phenomena, something which is entirely beyond sense-perception, and the idea of which filled the Vedic Rishis with awe and reverence. When Parjanya (the Thundering Rain-God) is invoked to "roar and thunder and give fruitfulness, and to fly around with his chariot full of water" ; or when Ushas (Dawn) is described as chasing away the dark veil of night and awakening all creatures to cheerfulness, the Rishis must be thinking of the natural aspects of their deities. But when they declare that Parjanya is the lord of all moving creatures, that all creatures abide in him and that he is the independent monarch, or when the Dawn is asked to give them riches and stand to them in the relation of a mother to sons, they evidently are thinking of some divine being behind the clouds and behind the dawn.

* The citations of the Rigvedic texts above are from translations given in Muir's "Original Sanscrit Texts" (1884) vol. V.; Max Muller's "Origin and growth of Religion" (1882), &c.

When Agni (the Fire-God) is spoken of as consuming and blackening the woods with his tongue, or roaring like the waves of the sea, as having clarified butter for his food and smoke for his mark, as being driven by the wind and rushing through the woods "like a bull lording it over a herd of cows," we seem to be reading poetry. By a stretch of imagination he may even now in his character of light be poetically described as having stretched out heaven and earth, (for without light heaven and earth would be indistinguishable), and as cognisant of the recesses of heaven, and of the secrets of mortals. But when he is described as "progenitor and father of heaven and earth, and maker of all that flies, or walks, or stands, or moves on earth," when he is invoked to be easy of approach even as a father to his son," to grant health, wealth, and long life, he is clearly invested with the attributes of Divinity. The descriptions of the Sun in the Rigveda as "standing on a golden chariot with golden arms and hands and eyes, nay even with a golden tongue," as enlivening men to pursue their ends and perform their work, as bliss-bestowing, all-seeing and wide-shining, or as one before whom the stars flee like thieves, one who sees the right and wrong among men or even as the soul of all things stationary and moving, might be matched with similar descriptions from modern poetry. But to the Vedic Rishis, the sun had also a supernatural aspect; and it is in this aspect that he is called the maker of all things (visvakarman), the lord of all living creatures, the god among gods, the divine leader of all the gods.

Henotheism.

There is no subordination among the deities of the Rigveda. "In the Veda" says Professor Max Muller "one god after another is invoked. For the time being all that can be said of a divine being is ascribed to him. The poet while addressing him, seems hardly to know of any other gods".* Dyaus, the sky, is frequently invoked as the father, Prithivi the earth, as the mother. They are described as the parents of the other gods including even the most powerful amongst them like Indra and Agni. "It is they, the parents, who have made the world, who protect it, who support by their power everything, whatever exists". † In some passages, Indra is credited with the production and support of the earth and heaven. In one passage we read: "The greatness of Indra exceeds the heaven (Dyaus), exceeds the earth (Prithivi) and the sky." Elsewhere, the Heaven and the Earth are said to be but as half compared with him—the same Heaven and the same Earth who in other passages are described as his parents. "The other gods" one poet says "were sent away like (shrivelled up) old men ; thou, O Indra, becomest the king." "No one is beyond thee" says, another poet "no one is better than thou art, no one is like unto thee." In some texts, Varuna (Gr. "Uranos") is sovereign ruler ; he upholds heaven and earth ; he made the sun to shine ; the wind is his breath ; the rivers flow by his command ; he perceives all that exists

* Max Muller's "Lectures on the origin and growth of Religion" (1882) p. 277.

† Max Muller *Op. cit.* p. 284.

within the heaven and earth and all that is beyond; the winkings of men's eyes are all numbered by him. In other texts, the same Varuna unquestionably the most ancient, and probably the most elevated of all the Vedic deities, is represented as singing the praises of the sun, whose independent authority can not be resisted by him. This peculiar form of polytheism has been called by Max Muller "Henotheism," or the worship of single gods.

Tendency towards monotheism.

Certain of the Vedic gods, were called Visvakarmá (maker of the universe) and Prajápati (lord of all creatures). Rishis of a critical and reflective turn of mind must at times, have been struck by the incongruity of the application of such epithets to diverse divinities; and they boldly asserted the unity of the Godhead. Says one Rishi: "Sages name variously that which is one; they call it Agni, Yama, Mátarisvan." Another Rishi says: "The wise poets represent by their words Him who is one with beautiful wings, in many ways." "In the beginning" says a third "there arose Hiranyagarbha; he was the one born lord of all this. He established the earth and this sky." "He is alone God above all gods."

The Bráhmanas;

As time rolled on, the hymns which the bards of the Rigvedic times had sung became more and more antiquated. Our Aryan ancestors had great faith in them. Those hymns had led their forefathers to victory, and had brought down count-

less blessings from above. The art of writing had not yet been invented; and the hymns were very numerous and very long. There were over a thousand of them in the Rigveda; and each would, on the average, fill one page of an octavo volume. This was not all: every hymn must be recited in a particular manner—every word, every syllable must be pronounced in a prescribed way. Besides, many idioms of the majority of the hymns gradually became obsolete. The Aryan territories gradually covered a considerably wider area; population increased largely; and considerable progress was made in the arts and manufactures. Every Aryan was expected to have gone through the hymns once. But very few of those who were engaged in the ordinary occupations of life could afford space in their brains for a thousand and odd long hymns, with obsolete idioms and expressions, so as to be able to reproduce them at a given notice. All these circumstances tended to create a class of men, the Brahmans, who treasured up the hymns in their memory, and officiated at the sacrifices. The accumulation of wealth by the Aryans, who now began to call themselves Dvijas, twice-born, furthered the division of labour amongst them, and afforded the Brahmans opportunity for devoting themselves entirely to their pursuits. The Rigvedic poets belonged, as a rule, to the mass of the people. By far the greater number of their prayers were for cattle, grain, and similar earthly blessings—a fact which shews that they had, like the rest of their community, to struggle for exis-

tence. They could not afford much time for speculation; their attention was all but engrossed by temporal objects. But now the Brahmans obtained leisure for speculating upon theosophical and philosophical subjects, and for elaborating and thus complicating, the sacrificial rites and ceremonies of their ancestors. Consciously or unconsciously, they also enveloped these ritualistic ceremonies in so dark a mystery that none but professional adepts could properly interpret them. Thus the poetical nature-worship of the primitive Indo-A'ryas stiffened into a dry creed of sacrifice and penance (Bráhmanism). Liturgical treatises, known as the *Bráhmanas,* containing elaborate rules for the performance of sacrifices, were composed. The minutest rules were framed for penance, not only for mistakes committed and observed during the performance of a sacrifice but also for hypothetical omissions which might have slipped the observation of priests. Thus the liturgical literature became so very cumbersome, and the sacrificial ceremonial so very intricate, that the Kshatriyas and Vaisyas were obliged to leave them to the care of the Brahmans, who were thus created sole trustees, as it were, of the religious welfare of the twice-born classes, and from the nature and importance of their function occupied the highest social rank.

Though the Bráhmanas are supposed to treat of various topics, Karmavidhána, which lays down rules and regulations for the performance of sacrificial rites and ceremonies, occupies the most prominent place, all other topics being subordinate to it. Dr. Hang thus

sums up the importance attached to sacrifice, according to the doctrine of the *Bráhmanas*:

their extravagant estimate of sacrificial ceremonies.

"The sacrifice is regarded as the means of obtaining power over this and the other world, over visible as well as invisible beings, animate as well as inanimate creatures.... The Yajna (sacrifice) taken as a whole is conceived to be a kind of machinery, in which every peice must tally with the other, or a sort of large chain in which no link is allowed to be wanting, or a staircase by which one may ascend to heaven. ... It exists from eternity and proceeded from the Supreme Being (Prajápati or Brahma) along with the *Traividyá,* i.e. the threefold sacred science (the Rik verses, the Sámas or Chants, and the Yajus or Sacrificial formulæ). The creation of the world itself was regarded as the fruit of a sacrifice performed by the Supreme Being." *

The Upanishads;

It was not long before the ascendancy of the Brahmans established during the last period was disputed by the other classes of the Aryan society. The legends representing a Brahman hero (Ráma Jámadagnya) as having exterminated the Kshatriyas thrice seven times, and subsequently, as himself vanquished by the Kshatriya Ráma, the hero of the Rámáyana, and a host of other legends,

* Hang's "Aitareya Bráhmana" (Bombay, 1863) i. pp. 73-74.

indicate in unmistakeable language the contests that went on between the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas after the establishment of Bráhmanism. The complicated and elaborate sacrificial rites and ceremonies, which were the characteristic features of that creed, formed, as we have seen the chief basis of Brahmanic influence. But, an important movement, in which the Kshatriyas * seem to have taken the leading part, began in reaction against the exaggeration of the efficacy and importance of sacrifice, and terminated in the establishment of a sort of modified, rationalistic, Bráhmanism. Such is the high notion entertained about sacrifices by the *Bráhmanas* that according to one of these, the gods themselves became immortal by repeated sacrifices. But works known as the *Upanishads* † now appeared, which put forth the doctrine of the superiority of spiritual knowledge to sacrificial ceremonies. "The wise who perceive him [Supreme Spirit] within their self" says one Upanishad, ' to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others."‡

* In the Chhándogya Upanishad (v. 3) king Pravahana (a Kshatriya) is said to have asked the son of Gautama (a Brahman) some difficult questions about future life ; the son, failing to answer, returns to his father who is equally unacquainted with the answer. Gautama goes to the king and asks to be instructed. Pravahana grants his request saying, "this knowledge did not go to any Bráhmana before you, and therefore this teaching belonged in all the worlds to the Kshatra class alone" "Sacred Books of the East" Vol. I. p. 78.

† The Upanishads referred to in this section are the more ancient ones which form a portion of the Vedic literature,such as Brihadáranyaka, Chhándogya, Kausítaki, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Aitareya, Taittiríya, Mundaka, Mándúkya.

‡ Katha Upanishad, II. 5. 13 "Sacred Books of the East," vol. XV, p. 19.

"Those who imagine," says another, "that oblations and pious gifts are the highest object of man are fools; they do not know what is good."*

protest against sacrificial ceremonies.

The sacrifices which formed the essential doctrine of Bráhmanism were of two kinds—(1) The grand and elaborate sacrifices, in which the services of a large number of priests were necessary; and (2) the simple domestic sacrifices consisting of Five Sacraments or Devotional Acts, *viz.*, (i) an oblation to the gods offered on the domestic fires, (ii) an offering in honor of all sentient beings, (iii) an offering to the Manes, (iv) repetition of the Vedas, and (v) gifts to men and hospitality. With the progress of rationalism, the reactionary movement against Bráhmanism, the first class of sacrifices gradually fell into desuetude.† These, however, were the only sacrifices at which the services of the Brahmans were essential. The Five Sacraments still continued to be performed by the twice-born classes; but Brahman, Kshatriya or Vaisya, he did not require the assistance of priests at these simple sacrifices. He was his own priest; his home was his place of sacrifice; and the materials he required for it were of the simplest character,—rice, clarified butter, water, and a log of wood. Thus the establishment of rationalistic Bráhmanism struck at the root of Brahmanical ascendancy, by shaking men's faith in the efficacy of those sacrifices on which were based the pretensions of the Brahmans to

* Mundaka Upanishad, I. 2, 10.

† They are only incidentally mentioned in the Manusamhitá.

the religious trusteeship of the Dvijas, and by opening a path—the path of knowledge—which any Dvija seeking for salvation might follow independently, to reach the goal of his desires.

Pantheism.

In the Upanishads the doctrines of Pantheism and Monotheism superseded that of the Henotheism of the Vedas. "As the spider comes out with its thread, or as small sparks come forth from fire, thus do all senses, all worlds, all devas, all beings come forth from that Self." * "From that Soul (Brahma) verily sprang forth ether, from ether air, from air fire, from fire water, from water earth,"† That soul is the light of lights and immortal life. Every creature exists in Him alone. He is the all-pervading, all-wise, omniscient, eternal, self-existing being. He is not born; nor does He die. He is all-seeing, not derived from anything else, eternal, indestructible. As flowing rivers are resolved into the sea losing their names and forms, so the wise freed from name and form, pass into the Divine Spirit which is greater

* Brihadáranyaka Upanishad II. 1,20. (Sacred Books of the East Vol. XV. p. 105) "If in this world a person knows the Soul then the true end of all human aspirations is gained, if a person in this world does not know the Soul, there will be a great calamity. The wise who discern in all beings the Brahman become immortal after departing from the world" (Talavakára Upanishad II. 5.) "Those who imagine that oblations and pious gifts are the highest object of man are fools; they do not know what is good; but those who with subdued senses, with knowledge, and the practice of the duties of a mendicant in the forest follow austerity and faith go freed from sin, to the abode of the Immortal Spirit" (Mundaka Upanishad, I. 2, 10-11).

† Taittiríya Upanishad, II. 1st anuváka.

than the great. With the movement started by the Upanishads commenced the age of enquiry; the attention of men was turned inwards. They began seriously and earnestly to ask :—

" When men away from earth have past
Then live they still ? "*

" Is Brahman the cause ? Whence are we born ? By what do we live ? Where do we go ? At whose command do we walk after the land, in happiness and misery ? Is time the cause, or nature, or law, or chance or the elements ?" † "Does the ignorant when departing this life go to that world (of the Supreme Brahma) ? Does the wise when departing this life obtain that world ? "‡

"In the whole world" says Schopenhauer "there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life—it will be the solace of my death."

Buddhist-Hindu period : Buddhism ;

One of the most important results of the movement of Jnánakánda inaugurated by the Upanishads is the system which is called after Gautama, the Buddha (*i. e.* the "enlightened"). He was the son of Suddhodana, king of Kapilavastu, and was born about 500 years

* Muir's "Sanscrit Texts". (London 1884). Vol. v. p. 331.

† Svetásvatara Upanishad I, 1.

‡ Taittiríya Upanishad, II. 6th anuváka.

before the birth of Christ. * He was early impressed with the miseries to which humanity is subject : "Birth is sorrowful ; growth. decay, illness, death all are sorrowful ; separations from subjects we love, hating what can not be avoided, and craving for what can not be obtained, are sorrowful." To seek for a way which would lead to the cessation of all sorrow, he fled from home from all who were dearest and nearest to him ; and the heir-apparent to the throne of Kapilavastu became a poor student and homeless wanderer.

After studying the various systems of Brahmanical philosophy then in vogue he went into a jungle near the present Buddha Gayá, and there for six years practised severe asceticism which was then and still is a recognised path of Brahmanic salvation. Finding, however, the futility of the course of penance and mortification to which he subjected himself, he sat down under a tree—the celebrated Bo-tree—and there for one whole day pondered over the problem which had long engaged his earnest attention. Before the day closed he had become enlightened (the Buddha)—found what he had vainly saught for in asceticism, the cause and the cure of human misery. He had, while at Kapilavastu, found that the pleasures of sense are degrading, vulgar, vain and profitless, and had more recently found the inefficacy of asceticism. The path of salvation which lighted upon him under the Bo-tree and which he devoted

* Mr. Rhys Davids has shewn B.C. 412 to be the probable date of the Buddha's death, "Buddhism" (1886) p. 213. The sketch of Buddhism given here is chiefly drawn from that admirable little book.

the remaining years of his life in preaching with characteristic missionary zeal, is what he called the "Middle Path". It is summed up in eight fundamental principles,

its fundamental principles.

viz. (1) right belief; (2) right aims; (3) right speech; (4) right actions; (5) right means of liveli-hood; (6) right endeavour; (7) right mindfulness; (8) right meditation. The means requisite for salvation is still more briefly summed up by the Buddha in the following verse:—

"To cease from all wrong doing
To get virtue
To cleanse one's own heart,
This is the religion of the Buddha."

The goal to which such a life of right conduct leads is Nirvána—the "sinless, calm state of mind, the condition of perfect peace, goodness and wisdom."

There are several important points in which the system promulgated by Buddha differed from orthodox Hinduism. In the first place, he disregarded caste-distinctions. One of the most prominent leaders of the Order founded by him was Upali, a barber by caste; and a rope dancer was not considered too low for it. On one occasion, he was treated by a goldsmith (a member of one of the lower castes) to a dish of pork, a dish which is said to have caused his death. On another occasion he became the guest of a courtesan. The salvation of the despised Súdra was of as great concern to him as that of the honoured Bráhman. Secondly, he struck at the root of the Bráhman ascen-

its divergence from Hinduism.

dancy by teaching and preaching in Páli, the language of the people, instead of in Sanskrit. He preached alike to princes and people, men and women, learned and ignorant. Thirdly, he carried his protest against the ritualism of the Bráhmanas even further than the authors of the Upanishads by ignoring the Vedas.

Amicable relations between Buddhism and Hinduism.

But during the lifetime of Gautama, and for a long time afterwards, it is doubtful if the divergence of his system from that of Bráhmanism was fully seen. For at least ten centuries Buddhism prospered side by side with Hinduism. Buddha respected, and was respected by, Bráhmans as well as by the members of his Order who were called Srámans. Some of the distinguished members of his Order were Bráhmans. Asoka Piyadasi, who did for Buddhism what Constantine did for Christianity, always considered Bráhmans and Srámans as equally deserving of reverence and liberality. Even so late as the time of Fa Hian and Hiouen Thsang, we find Buddhism and Hinduism flourishing side by side, and Buddhist princes lavishing gifts upon Bráhmans and Srámans alike.

Progress under Asoka.

Buddhism did not make much progress until the reign of Asoka about the middle of the 3rd century B. C. He sent Buddhist missionaries to outlying parts of India and to Bactria, Burma, Ceylon, and even to Egypt and Syria. His edicts engraved on rocks and pillars in various parts of India are "full of a lofty spirit of tolerance and righteousness." Toleration, generosity,

charity, kindness to relations and friends, obedience to parents, mercy towards all animals and reverence towards Bráhmans and Srámans are among the precepts taught in them.

Later Buddhism an essentially non-Aryan form of faith.

Buddhism as it spread amongst the people did not supersede their coarse superstitions but was simply engrafted on them. Its tacit disregard of caste made it highly acceptable to the Scythians or Turanians of the North who looked upon that institution with aversion. They professed Buddhism but retained their vulgar superstitions. The consequence was that the noble system of Gautama, which as propounded by him embodied some of the noblest results of Aryan culture and Aryan thought in India, began soon after the reign of Asoka to be transformed into some of the grossest forms of Scythian idolatry. In Tibet it was deformed into Lamaism "a religion not only in many points different from, but actually antagonistic to the primitive system of Buddhism." An infinity of absurd legends gathered round the Buddha. His image and relics were devoutly worshipped. But the inborn Turanian love for idolatry did not stop with the worship of the Buddha. A host of other deities were created, and a debasing belief in charms and incantations, which had been the special object of Gautama's scorn, began to grow vigorously.

Personal description of the Vedic deities does not imply idolatry.

The fate of Bráhmanism was in many respects similar to that of its offspring, Buddhism. The Aryans of the Vedic period were not image-worshippers. There are indeed suspicious texts. We read of Varuna as "arrayed in golden mail and surrounded by his messengers or angels", and as occupying along with Mitra, a "palace supported by a thousand columns." Similarly, the Maruts are described as adorned with rings and as having anklets on their feet, golden ornaments on their breasts and golden helmets on their heads. So also Agni is said to have golden teeth, a thousand eyes and a thousand horns. But such epithets are merely allegorical, and the allegory is in some cases fancifully mystified. The very extravagance of the expressions would militate against the hypothesis of image-worship. There is an abundance of texts which would make it apparent, that the A´ryas of the Vedic period in the personal descriptions of their deities had no idols in view. * Such descriptions are evidently figurative. Had idolatry been prevalent during the Vedic period,

* The personal appearance of Indra is described in several passages. He is frequently called *susípra*. His jaws are ruddy-coloured ; his hair is of a golden hue, his arms are long and far-extended. But all our suspicions of the worship of Indra in his image are to some extent removed by several other passages, where his forms are said to be endless. In one passage, Agni is described as footless and headless ; elsewhere he is said to have three heads. Had an image of the fire-god been present before the Rishis, it is not likely that its descriptions would have been so diametrically opposite.

it would have been in still greater force in the period immediately succeeding it, when a halo of sanctity had spread round the Vedas. But even so late as the time of the Manusamhitá, we find in that code only two passages * in which there is any reference to idolatry, and that too in such a manner as to leave no room for doubt that it was as yet confined to the Dasyus or the aborigines. The deities are still Vedic. † There is no mention of the gods and goddesses of the later Hindu pantheon. But in the Grihya Sútras we read of vulgar practices and vulgar superstitions; and in the Manusamhitá there are dark hints as to the existence of idols. The Aryans never persecuted the aborigines on account of their religion. On the contrary, their anxiety to Aryanise the aboriginal populations and thus establish their supremacy over them, made them pander to their superstitions. ‡ According to their code of national morality, the deities adored in a conquered country are to be respected, and the laws of the conquered nations are to be maintained. §

Saivism.

From A'ryavarta in Northern India, the Aryans gradually extended southward. From the mention in the Manusamhitá, of Paundrakas, Draviras &c. as fallen Kshatriyas it would appear that the partial Aryanisation of these people had

* Manu III 152; IV. 130.

† Manu I. 11, 50.

‡ The breaker of images is ordained to be fined in the Manusamhitá (ix. 285) But the Bráhmans who attend on them are to be shunned in Sráddhas.

§ Manu, VII. 201-203.

been effected by the time of the composition of that work. In the edicts of Asoka, three Dravidian kingdoms of Southern India, Pándya, Chola, and Kerala are referred to. The aborigines of the South, were not devoid of the elements of civilisation. The A´ryas settled amongst them as friendly colonists, not as conquerors, and their influence was owing chiefly to their moral and intellectual superiority. They, however, succeeded in establishing their supremacy all the more securely, and the Dravidians were incorporated with their society as Súdras. The original faith of these aborigines appears to have been a form of Demonolatry similar to the Shamanism of High Asia. * It is a worship of evil spirits by means of bloody sacrifices and frantic dances, its objects being not gods, or heroes, but demons, cruel, revengeful and capricious. The Aryanisation of the aborigines gradually reacted upon the original religious system of the A'ryas. It is probable that the different forms of Demonolatry prevalent amongst the various sections of the aborigines, especially the Dravidians of the South, shaped, moulded and refined by Aryan thought, gave rise to Saivism. † It is conjectured by Lassen and Stevenson, that the phallic emblem "may have been at first an object of

* Caldwell's "Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages," second edition, p.p. 579ff; the favourite deities of the Hinduised Gonds (Dravidian) are Siva and Bhavání.

† The traditions of the Gonds (a Dravidian tribe inhabiting a large area in Central India) relate how after they were born they lived at Dhavalágiri, the seat of Mahádeva. Bose, Journ. As. Soc. Bengal, vol. LIX, pt. I, pp. 276 ff.

veneration among the aboriginal or non-Aryan Indians; and that it was subsequently adopted by the Bráhmans from them, and associated with the worship of Rudra." *

Rudra of the Rigveda;

We find in the Atharva-veda, Rudra, the Storm-God of the Rigveda, gradually gaining in importance and appearing oftener in the terrible than in the beneficent aspect of his nature. He is invoked as lord of life and death; and his identification with Agni, the Fire God, as the author of destruction, is more frequent. In the Yajur-veda, he receives the appellations of Isána, I'svara, and Mahádeva, the "Great God," the name by which he is still most popularly known. So far, however, there is nothing that throws much light on his transformation into the great popular god known under this name; there is, however, one hymn in the Yajurveda that does, at least to some extent.† In it his popular and non-Aryan origin is scarcely veiled. He is represented as the patron of carpenters, smiths, watermen, hunters, thieves, robbers, and beggars.

transformed into Mahadeva of later Hinduism.

We do not know the exact steps which led to the transformation of the Vedic Rudra into the Mahádeva of later Hinduism. It was an accomplished fact in the earlier centuries of the Christian Era. The Indian Dionysos of Megasthenes is usually identified with Siva. Sivaite figures alternating with Buddhist symbols are represented on coins of the Indo-Scythian kings about the beginning of the Christian era. Siva is the great patron of the

* Muir's "Original Sanscrit Texts" (1873) Vol. IV. pp. 406-407.

† Muir's "Original Sanscrit Texts" (1873), Vol IV., pp. 326 ff.

ancient dramatic and other literature. He is represented in a twofold character—the terror-inspiring and the beneficent. He is the Auspicious, as well as the Terrible His wife also appears in similar double character. She is Umá, the gracious, and Ambiká, the good mother, as well as Kálí, the black one, and Karálá, the horrible. In these two-fold aspects we trace, however indistinctly, the fusion of Aryan and non-Aryan conceptions of the Divinity, the former beneficent and loveable, the latter destructive and terrible. Against this hypothesis of the mixed origin of Siva, it may be urged, that though there are probably more temples dedicated to him than to his rival Vishnu, that though the most ancient renowned temples such as those of Somnáth and Visvesvara are appropriated to him, his worship is by no means popular. In fact, at the present day, he is worshipped chiefly by the higher caste Hindus. His temples at Benares are the only Siva temples which attract pilgrims on a large scale. His unpopularity may, however, be accounted for at least partially, by the fact of his remaining in the emblematic form of the phallic *linga,* whilst the rival divinities, including his consort, assumed forms more attractive to the popular mind.

The two-fold character, Aryan and non-Aryan of Siva and Káli'.

The genesis of Vishnu, and of his various Avatáras, is still more obscure than that of Siva. In the Rigveda, Vishnu is a name of the Sun-God, a deity indeed of sovereign rank, but a rank which he occupies in common with other deities. But there is no indication even in later Vedic literature

Vishnu.

of the supremacy enjoyed by him or rather by his Avatára, Krishna, in later Hinduism. "Krishna, the son of Devaki" is indeed mentioned in an ancient Upanishad, but only as the disciple of a sage. In the Mahábhárata however, he is the great man-God, the incarnation of Vishnu. * The steps which led to this popularisation of the Vedic Vishnu were probably similar to those which led to the popularisation of the Vedic Rudra. But we can only guess, as the evidence on the subject is very inconclusive. As early as the second century before the Christian Era, the story of Krishna was the subject of popular dramatic representations similar to the *Rásas* and *Yátrás* of the present day. The Indian Hercules, the worship of whom is referred to by Megasthenes, ambassador to the court of Chandragupta, King of Magadha, about the third century B. C., has been identified, though conjecturally, with Krishna.

Brahma.

Brahmá, who in orthodox Hinduism is regarded as the first of the three deities constituting the Hindu Trinity has never been popular. His worship is now prevalent at only a very few places—at Pokhar in Ajmir, and at Bithur in the Doab.

Conflict between Buddhism and Hinduism.

Circumstances similar to those which brought about the transformation of the system of Gautama into modern Buddhism caused the bifurcation of the original religion of the A'ryas into Saivism and Vaishnavism. Their

* The Vishnu of later Hinduism retains but little of the solar character of the Vishnu of the Vedic system, except in such symbols as the *chakra*.

origin was probably simultaneous. The earliest references to the existence of Saivism and Vaishnavism carry us back about a century or two before the Christian Era. This was also the time when those changes which converted the Hínáyana into Maháyana were creeping over Buddhism. It should be noted that it was about this time, that an important political revolution took place which found a good portion of Northern India in the occupation of Turanian or Scythian races. About the commencement of the Christian Era a competition arose between Buddhism on the one hand, and Vaishnavism and Saivism on the other. They were probably all different forms of aboriginal idolatry modified and elevated by Aryan culture. But there was an essential difference between the Buddhistic and the Hinduite groups of religion. The former denied the supremacy of the Bráhman, by their disregard for caste system, and their denial of the authority of the Vedas. Hinduism, on the other hand, was created, fostered, and patronised by the Bráhmans. In all its different forms the Bráhman influence is prominent. But Buddhism struck at the root of Bráhman ascendancy. It could not have survived long but for the patronage of powerful princes. In the earlier centuries of the Christian Era, the predomi nance of Hinduism or Buddhism became a question of vital importance to the Brahmans. Men like Kumárila Bhatta * entered into a vigorous contest

* Kumárila lived about the middle of the 8th century. He incited a persecution against the Buddhists; and it is said, that a prince in Southern India, at his instigation "commanded his servants to put

with the opponents of the sacred books of the A´ryas. The Aryan intellect was still in its full vigour, and the Aryan cause eventually won the day. When Fa Hian visited India (A.D. 400) Bráhman priests and deválayas were scarcely less numerous than Srámans and viháras. At the time of Hiouen Thsang (A.D. 629-648) Buddhism was on the decline. It was still the accepted religion of Magadha; but at Kányakubja, the then capital of that empire, there were two hundred temples against one hundred Buddhist monasteries. Srávasti and Kapilavastu were heaps of ruins; and at Benares there were thirty Sanghárámas against one hundred temples. Síláditya, the great Buddhist monarch, patronised the Hindu forms of faith. The contest went on for a few centuries longer. When Buddhism lost the support of kings, it could not stand any longer. In the twelfth century there were scarcely any Buddhists left in India; modern Hinduism as inculcated in the Puránas and Tantras became paramount.

Ultimate victory of Hinduism.

With Samkaráchárya dates the Puránic or Sectarian period of Hinduism. There were Hindu sects before his time. He is said to have entered into polemical discussions with

Puránic period: Samkara.

to death the old men and the children of the Buddhists, from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas." This must, however, be a highly exaggerated statement of some local persecution.

fortyeight different sects. * But the information about these is, as a rule, very meagre, unsatisfactory, and even contradictory.† The record of the Buddhist-Hindu period in the History of Hinduism is a very broken and unsatisfactory one. It is only in the case of Buddhism that it is any thing like satisfactory. We know, that side by side with the later form of Buddhism, there were formed Saivism and Vaishnavism; but the connecting links between them and the different forms of Vedic faith are missing, and we can only hazard guesses as to the time and mode of their formation. With the Puránic period we tread upon the firmer ground of history. Samkara was the first of a succession of great Hindu apostles who notwithstanding the accumulation round their names of many fables, more or less absurd, are historical personages. His date may be approximately given to be the end of the eighth century. Born in the Deccan, (according to most accounts in Malabar), he led an itinerant and

* The Vaishnava sects mentioned in the *Samkara-Vijaya* are: Bháktas, Bhágavatas, Vaishnavas, Chakrinas or Pánchaiátras, Vaikhanasas, and Karmahínas. The main tenets of several of these are still current; but the sects themselves have become extinct. The term Vaishnava is at present applied to a large division of the Hindus who are worshippers of Vishnu as Krishna, Ráma &c. The Saiva sects mentioned by A'nandagiri, the author of *Samkara-vijaya*, are the Saivas, Raudras, Ugras, Bháktas, Jangamas and Pásupatas. Of these the Jangamas alone, found chiefly in Southern India, have survived to the present day.

† In the Mahábhárata,' for instance, the Páncharátras and the Bhágavatas are supposed to be two closely connected sects. In the seventh century, however, they are spoken of by the poet Bána as two distinct sects. In the Varáha Purána, on the other hand, they are supposed to be identical. "It is by no means certain" says Barth

ascetic life wandering all over India, holding successful disputations with various sectaries and founding new sects. The leading doctrine preached by him was a strictly unitarian one, that there is only One sole First Cause and Supreme Ruler of the universe who is to be worshipped by meditation. This was however, meant for the cultured few. To the mass of the people, to those who could not rise up to such an abstract conception of the Divinity, he allowed the observance of such rites and the worship of such deities as are prescribed by the Vedas and other authoritative works. Preachers of such divergent forms of popular faith, as the Saiva, the Vaishnava, the Saura, the Sákta, and the Gánapatya * claimed to be his pupils. But Saivism claims him to be its special apostle, in fact, as an incarnation of Siva himself. † Saivism to this day retains much of the character which he gave to it—that of a highcaste philosophical religion.

Saivism,

In the Puránic period, it ceased to be popular. Besides Samkaráchárya,* the only other apostle it can boast of is Gorakhnáth, the founder of the *Kánphátá* Jogis ‡ so called on account of their ears being bored and rings inserted in them

"that in these different texts the same words always denote the same things; it is even probable that in the monumental inscriptions [of the second to the sixth century A. D] the term Bhágavata simply means worshipper of Vishnu. "Religions of India" (Translation, 1882), p. 194.

* The *Sauras* are worshippers of the Sun, and the Gánapatyas, worshippers of Ganapat or Ganesa.

† Samkara's preference for Saivism is doubtful.

‡ For information about these and other sects referred to in the text see Wilson's "Religious sects of the Hindus."

at the time of their initiation. The Saiva sects are small in number. There are not more than twelve of any importance, and their followings too are insignificant. Within the last four or five hundred years scarcely any new sect on Saiva principles has been started in any part of India, except the small sect of the Sittars of Southern India; and they only retained Siva as the name of the One God believed in by them, rejecting every thing in Siva worship not consistent with pure Monotheism. Saivism has inspired but little of what is grand and beautiful in the vernacular literatures. Since the close of the Buddhist-Hindu period, it has not been presented in popular and attractive forms. Siva has not gathered around him legends such as those of Krishna and Ráma, which interest the feelings or excite the imagination of the populace. The Saiva literature, especially vernacular, in richness or variety, falls far short of the Vaishnava. Saivism cannot boast of such popular pilgrim-resorts as Puri, or of such sainted teachers as Chaitanya.

becomes unpopular.

Sáktism.

The remarks just made with regard to Saivism apply also to the worship of his consort or Sakti, though not to the same extent. The phallic emblem in which Siva is worshipped is of too mystic a nature for popular conception. His consort, however, is usually represented in forms such as excite awe and terror in the popular mind. Hence the popular craving for her propitiation by sacrifices and self-inflicted tortures. The temples* dedicated

* The Vindhyavásiní near Mirzapur, and Jválámukhí, Nagarkot, are among the most ancient of these

to her attract large crowds of pilgrims. The Sáktas, however, form but few specialised sects. The Dakshináchári or "right-hand" Sáktas perform their worship publicly and conformably to the Vedic and Puránic ritual. The worship of the Vámáchari or the "left-hand" Sáktas, however, is performed in secret and in accordance with special Tantras which prescribe rites of a most objectionable description. All the forms of their worship require the use of some or all of the five *Makáras,—Mámsa* (flesh), *Matsya* (fish), *Madya* (wine), *Maithuna* (women) and *Mudrá* (mystical gesticulations). It should be stated, however, that there is an esoteric side of this Sáktism; and the Tantras which enjoin orgistic rites of a highly obscene character also inculcate asceticism and a pure and devotional state of mind.

Vaishnavism.

Vaishnavism has unquestionably been the dominant faith of the Hindus in the Puránic period. As Siva has for his emblem the *linga*, so is Vishnu usually represented by the *Sálagráma*, an ammonite. If Vishnu worship had been confined to this emblem, it would probably have excited as little popular enthusiasm as the worship of Siva. The doctrine of Avátaras or "Descents" is the principal cause of its popularity. The conception of One, sole, infinite Cause is too abstract and too high for the people. They want something more tangible, more human. Christianity without the incarnation of Christ could not have influenced so considerable a portion of the western world. Mahomet is more of a living reality with the Mahometans than the Great God whose prophet he

claimed to be. Buddhism as it prevails at the present day is practically a worship of idols, of which the chief is the Buddha. Even a visible emblem like the *linga* or the *Sálagráma* is of too mystic a nature to attract the popular mind.

The most popular incarnations or descents of Vishnu are Krishna and Ráma. It is rather curious, that there is no allusion to the worship of either of these in the *Samkara-vijaya,* * though it is certain that the worship of both had been current before the time of Samkara. Probably the worship had not yet crystallised into definite sects.

Krishna-cult,

There are two distinct stages in the worship of Krishna which are of sufficient importance to be distinguished; the first may be called the Epic, and the second the Puránic. In the Mahàbhàrata (including the Bhagavatgítá), Krishna is represented as a great warrior, an astute politician, and a wise moralist. He did not take an active part in any war. But he was the chief councillor of the Pándavas in the great war between them and the Kurus; and he gave proofs of his physical prowess in killing Kamsa and Sisupála. The Mahábhárata, owing no doubt to the redactions of which it possesses abundant internal evidence, presents not a few inconsistencies and contradictions about his character. It is more than probable, that in its earliest form the great Epic knew Krishna only as a man, though, no

* Wilson, "Religious Sects of the Hindus" (1861) p. 17.

doubt a great man, a hero; and that it is only in subsequent redactions that the idea of a Divinity was gradually superadded to that of a hero. In some places in the Mahábhárata, Krishna appears as an intensely human being, as for instance, a statesman not very different from the ordinary type of that character at the present day. In the Dronaparva, he advises the Pándavas to try and kill Drona by foul means, as it would be impossible to kill him by fair. It was by Krishna's advice that one of the Pándavas, Bhíma, told Drona on the battle-field a falsehood, that Droná's son Asvatthámá was dead, with the object that overcome with grief for his son he would cease to fight! And yet it is this very Krishna, that in various other passages in the Mahábhárata is declared to be the incarnation of Vishnu. The Bhagavadgítá is the oldest, as it is certainly the sublimest, exposition of Krishna cult. But nowhere in it do we find that form of erotic Vaishnavism which is most popular at the present day. It is in the Vishnupurána, the Bhágavatpurána, and the Brahmavaivartapurána, especially in the two last named Puránas, that this form of Krishna-cult is developed. We have therefore called it Puránic Vaishnavism. It dwells especially on the infantine freaks and youthful amours—*lilás* as they are called—of Krishna. Krishna is represented as stealing various preparations of milk, not indeed solely for himself but also to feed monkeys with, and as sporting with the damsels of Vrindávana in a manner which

in the Mahábhárata;

in the Puranas.

moral sense must certainly condemn. It must be said however, that the sports are capable of allegorical or esoteric interpretation, that the thoughtful amongst the Vaishnavas interpret them in this way, and that the mass of them who cannot soar so high usually consider them as the mysterious *lílás* of incarnate Divinity. Puránic Vaishnavism is the religion of Love *par excellence*. The Bhagavatgítá introduced the doctrine of Bhakti, "faith, humble submission, absolute devotion, love for God." The Bhágavatpurána and the later Vaishnava literature carried this doctrine of Love to an excess which, notwithstanding much that is beautiful in it, must be condemned.

Ráma-cult.

Ráma, the other popular incarnation of Vishnu, bears a more irreproachable moral character than Krishna. Devotion to duty is his principal trait. Owing to an imprudent promise made by his father, Dasaratha, King of Ayodhyá, to his step mother, he goes into voluntary exile for fourteen years with Sítá, his wife, and Lakshmana, one of his brothers. While living in the forests of the Deccan, Sítá is carried away by Rávana, King of Lamká; and Ráma, with the help of monkeys (the aborigines of the Deccan), the most distinguished amongst whom is Hanumán, rescues his wife after a protracted war, and returns to Ayodhyá to reign. After many years, he banishes Sítá in order to please his subjects who had begun to entertain unjust suspicions as to her purity during her imprisonment in Lamká. After sometime, conclusive evidence of her purity is

given, a reconciliation is effected, and Sìtá returns to the bosom of the earth whence she had come forth long before.

The first great apostle of Vaishnavism was Rámánuja a native of Southern India, who lived about the middle of the twelfth century, A.D. * He preached the superiority of Vaishnavism over Saivism and gained many converts to his views. In consequence of persecution by the Chola King, in whose territory he resided, he with his followers took refuge with the Jaina King of Maisur, whom after sometime he converted to the Vaishnava faith. He is said to have established seven hundred convents (maths) of which four still remain. The followers of Rámánuja worship Vishnu or either of his incarnations, Krishna and Ráma. They do not appear to be very numerous, at least in Northern India.

Rámánuja.

Madhvácharya, the founder of the sect of Madhvàchàris, lived in the beginning of the thirteenth century. The sect is chiefly confined to Southern India. The object of Madhvácharya appears to have been to effect a friendly compromise between Saivism and Vaishnavism. Siva, Durgá and Ganesa, the principal deities of the Saiva

Madhvácharya.

* For the account of Rámánuja and other founders of sects described in this chapter, I am chiefly indebted to Wilson's "Religious Sects of the Hindus" (1861).

pantheon receive the adoration of the Madhvácháris along with Vishnu; and somewhat intimate relations between the Madhvváchári Vaishnavas and the Sankará-chári Saivas are maintained to the present day.

The next great name in the history of Vaishnavism is that of Rámánanda who probably lived about the end of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century. He was a great reformer. Samkaráchárya and Rámánuja had addressed themselves chiefly to the upper classes. What they wrote they wrote in Sanscrit; and they maintained caste distinctions. Rámánanda, like Gautama the Buddha, preached to the learned and the ignorant alike. It was he who made Vaishnavism, the religion of the people. Of his twelve chief disciples, the most distinguished belonged to very low castes. Kabir was a weaver, Raidás a currier, and Sena, a barber. All three of them especially Kabir were great reformers. According to the *Bhaktamálá*, one of the most important works of the sect, distinctions of caste are abrogated by it, at least amongst the clerical class. Rámánanda taught that such distinctions were inadmissible in the case of those who quitted the ties of nature and society, and who were called by him *Avadhúta*, *i.e.* liberated. It is not known that Rámánanda wrote anything himself. But, his followers all wrote in Hindi, the most distinguished amongst them being the sainted Tulasi Das, Sur Das and Nabháji. The especial objects of worship of the followers of Rámánanda are Ráma, Sítá,

Rámánanda.

Lakshmana and Hanumán. They are most numerous in the country along the Ganges and the Jamuná.

The work of reformation commenced by Rámánanda was vigorously continued by Kabir, the most celebrated of all his disciples. He went much further than his master, and boldly assailed the idolatrous worship and caste system of the Hindus. He flourished about the beginning of the fifteenth century. He made no distinction between Hindus and Mahomedans. His catholicity was so great, indeed, that to this day the Mahomedans claim him as one of their persuasion. Tradition relates a dispute on Kabir's death between the Hindus and the Mahomedans as to the disposal of his corpse, the Hindus insisting upon burning, and the Mahomedans upon burying it. In the midst of this dispute Kabir is represented to have appeared before the disputants and told them to look underneath the cloth which was supposed to cover his remains. They did as told, but instead of the corpse found only a mass of flowers. The dispute was settled by the Hindu party taking one half of the flowers and burning them at Benares, and the Mahomedan party taking the other half and burying them at Magar near Gorakhpur.

Kabir,

Kabir attacked the superstitions of the Hindus as well as of the Mahomedans with equal vigour. "To Ali and Ráma" he taught "we owe our existence, and should therefore show similar tenderness to all that live; of

attacks Hindu and Mahomedan superstitions.

what avail is it to shave your head, prostrate yourself on the ground, or immerse your body in the stream? Whilst you shed blood you call yourself pure and boast of virtues that you never display; of what benefit is cleaning your mouth, counting your beads, performing ablution, and bowing yourself in temples, when whilst you mutter your prayers, or journey to Mecca and Medina deceitfulness is in your heart? The Hindu fasts every eleventh day, the Musalmán during the Ramzan. Who formed the remaining months and days that you should venerate but one? If the Creator dwell in tabernacles, whose residence is the universe? Who has beheld Ráma seated amongst images, or found him at the shrine to which the pilgrim has directed his steps? The city of Hara is to the east, that of Ali to the west; but explore your own heart, for there are both Ráma and Karim."

The Kabirpanthis, on account of their founder having been a reputed disciple of Rámánanda maintain a friendly attitude towards the Vaishnavas, and are often included among the Vaishnava sects. It is no part of their creed, however, to worship any Hindu deity or to observe any Hindu rites or ceremonies, though the lay members usually conform to the usages of their castes. The moral principles of the sect are thus summed up by H. H. Wilson: "Life is the gift of God, and must not therefore be violated by his creatures; Humanity is therefore a cardinal virtue, and the shedding of blood whether of man or animal a heinous crime. Truth is the other great principle of their code, as all

the ills of the world, and ignorance of God are attributable to original falsehood. Retirement from the world is desirable, because the passions and desires, the hopes and fears which the social state engenders, are all hostile to tranquillity and purity of spirit, and prevent that undistrubed meditation on man and God which is necessary to their comprehension. The last great point is the usual sum and substance of every sect amongst the Hindus, implicit devotion, in word, act and thought to the *guru*, or spiritual guide."*

The Kabirpanthis are most numerous in Northern and Central India.

Nának.

Nának Sháh, the founder of the Sikh sect, was chiefly indebted for his religious ideas to Kabir. Nának flourished towards the end of the fifteenth century. He preached a strictly monotheistic creed, and made no distinction between Hindus and Mahomedans amongst his followers. The Sikh religion as preached by Nának was one of high spirituality and benevolence. But towards the close of the seventeenth century, Guru Govind converted the Sikh community into a kind of armed confederacy. He combined the worship of "steel" with that of the *granth*, the Book of Nának, directed his followers always to have steel upon their persons, and made them vow vengeance against the Mahomedans who had for sometime past been severely persecuting them. Though the Sikhs do not worship any of the Hindu

Guru Govind.

* "The Religious sects of the Hindus." (1861) p. 94.

deities, they do not deny their existence and they accept the Puranic legends regarding them as true. Nának though he preached monotheism acknowledged the whole of the Hindu mythology; and Guru Govind was a votary of the goddess Bhavání. He, says of himself: "Durgá Bhavání appeared to me when I was asleep, arrayed in all her glory. The goddess put into my hand the hilt of a bright scymetar which she had held in her own. 'The country of the Mahomedans' said the goddess 'shall be conquered by thee, and numbers of that race shall be slain.'

Dádu.

Dádu, the founder of the sect of Dádupanthis, was a native of Ahmedábád. He flourished about the beginning of the seventeenth century, and was a cotton cleaner by profession. He borrowed much of his teachings from Kabir; and his followers still maintain a friendly intercourse with the Kabirpanthis. He, like Kabir, prohibited idolatry. and enjoined the worship of one God under the name of Ráma. The Dádupanthis are most numerous in parts of Rájputána.

NEO-VAISHNAVISM.

Neo-Vaishnavism.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century Vaishnavism underwent a great change—a change which, on the whole must be pronounced to have been for the worse. The Vaishnavism,as preached by Rámánuja and Rámánanda breathes a tone of pure morality, and knows nothing of the loves

of Krishna and Rádhá. In the system of Rámánuja, Rádhá is unknown ; in the Bhágavatapurána, the great gospel of Vaishnavism, Rádhá is only once mentioned in a passage of great ambiguity. The Krishna of Rámánuja, of the Mahábhárata and the Bhágavata is closely identified with Vishnu. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, Krishna-cult entered a new phase which may be called Neo-Vaishnavism. Krishna became the supreme deity. His residence according to the gospel of Neo-Vaishnavism, the Brahmavaivartapurána, * is *goloka* which is far above the residences of Vishnu and Siva. The origin of the Hindu Trinity is traced to him : Vishnu springs into existence from his left, and Brahmá from his right hand. Rádhá unknown in older Vaishnavism, becomes his beloved. Literally "Rádhicá" means "one who worships ;" and it is more than probable, that the poet who constructed her had in his mind the allegorical representation of the love of a worshipper for the Deity. But the allegory was soon lost sight of, and Rádhá became an entity in the Hindu pantheon as real as Durgá, Lakshmí, and Sítá.

Vallabháchárya.

The first apostle of Neo-Vaishnavism was, Vallabháchárya. The two most popular festivals of this creed are the *Janmástamí*, the nativity of Krishna ; and the *Rásayátrá* in commemoration of the amours of that deity with Rádhá and the other damsels of Vrindávana. Vallabhácharya consist

* The date of this Purána, at least in its present form, is probably not earlier than the sixteenth century.

ently with this ideal of a voluptuous Divinity, taught, contray to the teachings of all previous reformers, that the Deity was to be worshipped "not in nudity and hunger, but in costly apparel and choice food, not in solitude and mortifications but in the pleasures of society, and the enjoyments of the world." The *Gosáins*, or spiritual guides of the sects founded by him unlike the spiritual guides of the sects we have been treating of hitherto, are as a rule, family men, well-clothed and well-fed. The Vallábhacháris are principally recruited from well-to-do mercantile communities ; and the spiritual guides themselves often do not consider it inconsistent with their character to engage in trade. The temples and establishments of the Vallabhácháris are most numerous at Mathurá and Vrindávana ; the latter of which is said to contain many hundreds.

Chaitanya.

Contemporary with Vallabhácharya was a reformer of a different type, of the type of Gautama the Buddha. Chaitanya was born at Nadiyá, in Bengal, in A. D. 1485. At twenty-four, he left home and becoming an ascetic spent the next six years in travelling and preaching, gathering round him numerous followers. In 1515, he settled at Nìlàchala near Katak, where he spent the remainder of his life in ecstatic meditation of Krishna. There is a tradition, that during a fit of trance produced by such meditation, he saw Krishna, Rádhá and other celestial beings sporting in the blue waters of the sea near Katak and walked into it to share their company ; his body is said to have been subsequently caught in a fisherman's

net, and recovered by his disciples. His death occurred about A. D. 1527. His was a religion of Love, Love towards God and Love towards man. His ideal of devotion was *mádhurya* or passionate attachment towards the deity. He overcame the opposition of his bitterest enemies by showing love towards them. He abrogated all distinctions of caste or race amongst his followers; and two of his most prominent disciples were Mahomedans. He admitted into his sect five Mahomedans, who had purposed to rob him but were held back by his sanctity and converted by his preaching. Chaitanya is now worshipped by his followers as an incarnation of Krishna. The principal seat of his worship is Nadiyá.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLISH INFLUENCE ON HINDUISM

Composite character of Hinduism.

From the brief sketch we have just given of the history of Hinduism, it will be seen that in one sense it is a very ancient religion, in another sense it is not. Though professedly based upon the Vedas, it is no more like the Vedic religion, than man is like the protoplasmic germ out of which he is supposed to have been evolved. It has grown during three thousand years to be what it is at present. It is not the creed of the Rigveda, nor of the Bráhmanas, nor of the Upanishads, nor of the Purânas; it is neither Saivism, nor Vaishnavism, nor Sáktism; yet it is all these. It can hardly be called a homogeneous religion in the sense that Judaism and Zoroastrianism are among the older, or Christianity and Mahomedanism are among the more recent reli-

gions. The catholicity and ecleticism of Hinduism have been of immense advantage to it. If it had shewn less toleration, less adaptability to its environment, it would probably not have survived so long. But, there is a remarkable unity in the diversity of the forms of faith comprised under Hinduism. Though there are numerous Saiva, Vaishnava and other sects, the number of sectaries is comparatively insignificant. * The majority of the Hindu population accept the whole system of the Hindu mythology. Preference for any particular deity does not preclude the worship of the other deities. Sectarianism, that is strict adhesion to one divinity or one faith, is quite unusual. The usual practice is for one and the same Hindu to pay his homage to Vishnu, Siva, and the various deities of the Vaishnava and Saiva pantheons. The same Hindu will often in one round of pilgrimage visit temples dedicated to Siva, Krishna, and Deví. The same Hindu will often in the course of one year celebrate the worship of these and various other divinities; and if he is philosophically disposed, he will with Bhartrihari exclaim: "One god, Siva or Vishnu."

The Vedic period was the period of the political supremacy of the Aryans. The religions of that period which have been preserved in the Vedas, the Bráhmanas and the Upanishads are essentially of Indo-Aryan des-

* In Bengal out of a total Hindu population of 47, 749, 242, there are only 499, 659 persons belonging to the various Vaishnava sects, and 106, 178 persons to the Saiva, and other sects.—"Census of India" (1891) Vol. III. p. 149.

cent. The Buddhist-Hindu period was the period, at least in part, of the political supremacy of the non-Aryan races. The Puránic period was the period of the political supremacy of the Mahomedans; and the forms of faith which sprung up during that period bear abundant traces of Mahomedan influence. As this influence has been felt till very recently, and as there is much popular misconception regarding it, we shall treat of it in some detail.

Tolerent policy of the Moslem rulers in India.

Much has been written on the intolerance of the Mahomedan rulers of India. But, the persecution of Jews by Christians, of one Christian sect by another, of the Protestants by the Roman Catholics, of the Roman Catholics by the Protestants, of one section of the Protestants by another in Christian Europe, was on the whole severer than that of the persecution of the Hindus by their Mussulman rulers in heathen India. The horrors of the Inquisition were here unknown, except, perhaps, in a small territory ruled by the Roman Catholics. Khafi Khan, himself a bigot, was shocked by the intolerant conduct of the Europeans of his day in India. (commencement of the 18th century).* It is doubtful if

* Speaking of those settled at Hughli, Khafi Khan says: "Of all their odious practices this was the worst:—Inthe post which they occupied on the sea-coast, they offered no injury either to the property or person of either Mahomedans or Hindus who dwelt under their rule; but if one of those inhabitants died leaving children of tender age, they took both the children and the property under their charge, and whether these young children were Sayids or whether they were Bráhmans, they made them Christians and slaves (*Mamluks.*)"

the cruelties perpetrated by the Portuguese at Salsette were equalled by the most fanatical and insensate Moslem that ever ruled in any part of India.*

Influence of Mahomedanism on Hinduism;

Mahomedanism did not place any insuperable barrier between man and man such as Hinduism interposed by its caste system. The meanest peasant amongst them could rise to the rank of the greatest nobleman. Mahomedans preached the brotherhood of man. The lowest Musalman had a right to read the Koran and to pray in the mosque. Not so with the Hindus. "Every action," says Alberuni, † "which is considered as the privilege of a Brahman, such as saying prayers, the

"In the ports of the Konkan, in the Dakhin, and on the sea-coast, wherever they had forts and exercised authority, this was the custom of that insolent people. ...... They allowed no religious mendicants (*fakirs*) to come into their bounds. When one found his way unawares, if he were a Hindu, he was subjected to such tortures as made his escape with life very doubtful; and if he were a Musalman, he was imprisoned and worried for some days, and then set at liberty." (Sir H. M. Elliot's "History of India" Vol. VII, p. 211.)

* A Portuguese armament landed at Salsette when least expected, and "carrying all before them, destroyed 1200 temples with all their images." A new expedition was fitted out soon after, which landed as before, "and not only destroyed the temples, but set fire to the cities, villages and all the habitations, and in a few hours reduced the whole island to ashes. The affrighted inhabitants fled almost naked from their houses and sought shelter on the shore of the neighbouring continent; and this fair scene of culture and crowded population, was converted at once into a smoking desert. Father Berno followed the troops, wielding a huge club, with which he beat down all the idols and brayed them in pieces." "Discoveries and Travels in Asia," (Edinburgh, 1820). By H. Murray, p. 77.

† Alberuni's "India" [Translation by E. C. Sachau] Vol. II, p. 136.

recitation of the Veda, and offering sacrifices to the fire, is forbidden to him [a Sudra] to such a degree, that when *e.g.* a Sudra or a Vaisya is proved to have recited the Veda, he is accused by the Brahmans before the ruler, and the latter will order his tongue to be cut off." Yet it is a curious fact that, notwithstanding the prestige which Mahomedanism enjoyed, as the Imperial religion; notwithstanding the equality which all its votaries enjoyed; notwithstanding such pressure as was exerted by the imposition, at times, of a poll tax on all non-Mahomedans, and notwithstanding more violent pressure exerted—though fortunately at rare intervals—by enthusiastic bigots, the great majority of the population of India remained Hindus. The fact that, notwithstanding the immigration of Mahomedans from various parts of Asia for some seven centuries or more, they still do not form more than a fifth of the entire population of India, speaks volumes in favour of the stability of Hinduism. But though Islam failed to make many converts, it exerted some influence on Hinduism. It was partly this influence that produced that succession of earnest reformers who shed such lustre on India from the commencement of the fourteenth to the close of the eighteenth century. They all preached the Unity of the Godhead; they all protested against caste; and not a few of them denounced idolatry.

In Southern India the influence of Mahomedanism on Hinduism is distinctly recognisable at an earlier date than in Northern India.

in Southern India.

"Criticism," says Dr. Barth, "is generally on the look out for the least traces on Hinduism of Christian influence, but perhaps it does not take sufficiently into account that which Islamism has exercised. . . . The Arabs of the Khalifat had arrived on these shores (of the Deccan) in the character of travellers, or merchants, and had established commercial relations and intercourse with these parts, long before the Afgans, the Turks, or the Moghuls, their co-religionists, came as conquerors. Now it is precisely in these parts that, from the ninth to the twelfth century, those great religious movements took their rise which are connected with the names of Samkara, Rámánuja A'nandatírtha, and Basava; out of which the majority of the historical sects come, and to which Hindusthan presents nothing analogous till a much later period. It has been remarked that these movements took place in the neighbourhood of old established Christian communities. But alongside of these there began to appear, from that moment, the disciples of the Koran. To neither of these do we feel inclined to ascribe an influence of any significance on Hindoo theology, which appears to us sufficiently accounted for by reference to its own resources; but it is very possible that, indirectly, and merely, as it were, by their presence, they contributed in some degree towards the budding and bursting forth of those great religious reforms which, in the absence of doctrines altogether new, introduced into Hinduism a new organisation and a new spirit, and had all this common characteristic that they developed very quickly under the guidance of an acknowledged head, and rested on a species of authority akin to that of a prophet, or an Iman. Now to effect such a result as this, the Arabian merchants in the first centuries of the Hegira, with the Mahomedan world at their back, were perhaps better qualified than the poor and destitute churches of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts." *

Oposition of E. I. Company to Christian missionaries;

The English on whom fell the mantle of the Moghul empire adopted a policy of perfect neutrality towards the religions of India. The Mahomedans had freely allowed their maulavis to preach Mahomedanism and make

* Barth's "Religions of India" (London 1882) p. 211.

conversions in a fair way. But the East India Company assumed an attitude of hostility towards Christian missionaries. They were probably the only Christian power that separated religion so completely from state policy. The Portuguese attempted to combine conversion with conquest in India. The Dutch, though not to the same extent, were also actuated by missionary zeal. The avowed object of the Spaniards for the conquest of America was conversion. As a trading body, the East India Company had considered it a part of their duty to preach Christ to the benighted "Gentu," and had entertained an establishment of paid Chaplains for the purpose. But as a sovereign power, the East India Company not only did not attempt to preach their religion themselves, but threw every possible obstacle in the way of missionaries to settle in their territories. When William Carey came to Calcutta in 1793, he had to preach the religion of Christ almost like a thief in constant fear of being deported to England ; and when six years later, he, Joshua Marshman and William Ward started systematic mission work, they sought shelter at Serampore, then a Danish possession.

its ostensible and real reasons.

The ostensible grounds assigned for this discouragement of the missionary were political. But the real reasons are thus given by a writer in the *Calcutta Review* :—*

"The Anglo-Indians who ultimately filled the Court [The Court of Directors] were essentially a proud bad race, greedy for gold, eager for license. They shared to a very wide extent the intense hatred of "me-

* *Op. cit,* June, 1859.

thodism" which then pervaded the upper grades of the middle class of Englishmen. The feeling was intensified by that scorn of priestly meddling which is an attribute of all aristocracies, and which to this hour is strongly manifested in Indian [Anglo-Indian] society. It does not now show itself in immoralities, but the boldest chaplains fail utterly in securing social weight. Out of Calcutta there is no Minister who would venture even to censure his flock for lax attendance, or want of respect for the priestly office. His silent, respectful, but complete defeat would teach him at once that an Indian station was not a parochial cure. The Missionary was *the* Interloper *par excellence*, and the hate of a camel for a horse, of a snake for a mungoose, was feeble when compared with the heat of an Anglo-Indian for the interloper. Partly from his training, partly from the first circumstances of the conquest, the Anglo-Indian official regarded India as his property, his peculium. An interloper was therefore in his eyes little better than a thief, a man who undersold him, interrupted his profits, and impaired his exclusive authority over the population. With that instinct which comes of self-defence he saw that the Missionary was the most dangerous of interlopers. If he succeeded and India became Christian, the profitable monopoly was at once destroyed. If he failed, the religious party would never rest till they had broken down the monopoly to give him free course and liberty. The class therefore hated the Missionary, and hoped perpetually for a blunder which should give them an opportunity of deporting them from the country. It was the knowledge of this feeling, of this predetermined conclusion, which tinged the Missionary movements so deeply with alarm."

The character of the founders of the British Empire as a body was such as was not likely to inspire respect for their religion. I shall let an English writer speak about them :

"Honest minded travellers retured to England, after exploring, then almost a *terra incognita* the provinces of "East India," and specially the territories of "the Great Mogul," to narrate how Christian men in a heathen land were put to shame by the benighted natives ; to descant on the gentleness, the fidelity, the temperance of the gentiles, and the violence, the rapacity, the licentiousness of the Christians. It is remarkable,

that almost all the earliest travellers speak, in the highest terms of the native character; commending the friendly feeling exhibited by both Hindus and Mahomedans to the few scattered Europeans, who found their way beyond the coast, and not unfrequently descanting upon the sorry return which these kindly manifestations elicited. An intelligent gentleman, who accompanied Sir Thomas Roe, early in the seventeenth century to the court of the Great Mogul, and who furnished an account of what he saw and did which was held in high repute at the time of its publication (1665), gives a chapter on "the most excellent moralities which are to be observed amongst the people of those nations" wherein he takes occasion to contrast the behaviour of the Heathen with that of the Christian man. After commenting on the industry and punctuality of the natives, in the XIV section of the memoir, he adds, 'This appears much in their justness manifested unto those who trade with them; for if a man will put it unto their consciences to sell the commodities he desires to buy at as low a rate as he can afford it, they will deal squarely and honestly with him; but if in those bargainings a man offers them much less than their set price, they will be apt to say, what dost thou think me a Christian, that I would go about to deceive them? It is a most sad and horrible thing to consider what scandal there is brought upon the Christian religion by the looseness and remissness, by the exorbitances of many, which come amongst them, who profess themselves Christians, of whom I have often heard the natives, who live here near the port where our ships arrive say thus, in broken English, which they have gotten, *Christian religion, devil religion*; *Christian much drunk*; *Christian much do wrong, much beat, much abuse others*: But to return unto the people of East India: Though the Christians, which come amongst them, do not such horrible things, yet they do enough to make Christianity itself evil spoken of; as a religion that deserves more to be abhorred, than embraced, for truly it is a sad sight there to behold a drunken Christian and a sober Indian; a temperate Indian and a Christian given up to his appetite. An Indian that is just and square in his dealing; a Christian not so; a laborious Indian and an idle Christian. O what a sad thing it is for Christian, to come short of Indians." And again in another place this writer sets down as one of the principle obstructions to the growth of Christianity in the East, "the most debauched lives of many coming thither, or living amongst them who

profess themselves Christians, by whom the Gospel of Jesus Christ is scandalised and exceedingly suffers."

"From the moment of their landing upon the shores of India, the first settlers cast off all those bonds, which had restrained them in their native villages; they regarded themselves as privileged beings—privileged to violate all the obligations of religion and morality, and to outrage all the decencies of life. They who came hither, were often desperate adventurers, whom England, in the emphatic language of the Scripture, had spurned out; men who sought all these golden sands of the East to repair their broken fortunes; to bury in oblivion a sullied name; or to wring, with lawless hand from the weak and unsuspecting, wealth which they had not the character or the capacity to obtain by honest industry at home. They cheated; they revelled in all kinds of debauchery; though associates in vice linked together by a common bond of rapacity—they often pursued one another with desperate malice, and few though they were in number, among them there was no unity, except an unity of crime."

"It is only from incidental allusions in the few works of travel and fewer political memoirs, which our ancestors have bequeathed to us, that we can gain any insight into the moral condition of the English in India, previous to the conquest of Bengal. Many writers who have described the rise and progress of the different East India Companies have given us somewhat startling accounts of the official rapacity of our predecessors—of the fierce contensions of the rival companies, of their unscrupulous conduct towards the natives and towards each other, of their commercial dishonesty, their judicial turpitude and their political injustice—all these things are broadly stated; but to the immorality of their private life we have little but indistinct allusion.

'"There was certainly society at the chief Presidency, during the administration of Warren Hastings; but in candour we must acknowledge it to have been most offensively bad society. Hastings himself, whatever may have been his character as a political ruler, had no great title to our admiration as a moral man. He was living, for years, with the wife of another, who lacking the spirit of cockchafer, connived with all imaginable *sangfroid* at the transfer of his wife's person to the possession of the Nabob; and when the convenient laws of a foreign land, deriving no sanction from Christianity, formally severed the bond

which had long been practically disregarded, the Governor-general had the execrably bad taste to celebrate his marriage with the elegant adultress, in a style of the utmost magnificence, attended with open display and festal rejoicing. What was to be expected from the body of society, when the head was thus morally diseased? Francis was a hundred-fold worse than Hastings. The latter was weak under a pressure of temptation; he was not disposed to "pay homage to virtue" by throwing a cloak over his vice; and did not sufficiently consider the bad influence, which his conduct was calculated to exercise over society at large. In him, it is true, there was a sad want of principle; but in Francis an evil principle was ever at work. His vices were all active vices—deliberate, ingenious, laborious. His lust was, like his malice, unimpulsive: studious; given to subtle contrivances; demanding the exercise of high intellectual ability. When he addressed himself to the deliberate seduction of Madame Grand, he brought all the mental energy and subtlety of matured manhood to bear upon the unsuspecting virtue of an inexperienced girl of sixteen. Here, indeed, were leaders of society; not only currupting the morals but disturbing the peace of the Presidency. The very members of the Supreme Council, in those days, could not refrain from shooting at each other. Barwell and Clavering went out. The latter had accused the former of dishonesty; and the former in return had called his associate "a liar". They met; but the contest was a bloodless one. Not so, that between Hastings and Francis. The Governor General shot the councillor through the body and thus wound up, in this country, to be renewed in another, the long struggle between the two antagonists. Such was the Council. The Supreme Court exercised no more benign influence over the morals of society. Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice, was a model of rapacity and injustice—corrupt as he was cruel—and others not far below him in rank were equally near him in infamy. Viewing the whole picture with an unprejudised eye, it is assuredly a most disheartening one."*

Missionary work,

But times have long since changed. A far better class of Englishmen now come to India. The opposition of the East India Company to missionary work was removed by the Charter of

* *Calcutta Review* Vol. I. (1844) p.p. 294-295, 298 *etseq.*

1813. Since then numerous Protestant missions have been established in different parts of India. The missionary is still not very popular in Anglo-Indian society. He sometimes raises inconvenient questions of morality. He raises his voice against the expansion of the excise revenue; he threatens another and more important source of revenue, that from opium, because he considers it immoral; and he sometimes takes the side of oppressed ryots against the powerful planter or the still more powerful official: to crown all, whatever he says or writes carries great weight with a certain section of the English people in England. Still no hindrance is now offered to missionary work. Within the last sixty years missionary societies have rapidly increased. In 1830, there were nine Protestant missions; in 1870 there were thirty-five. In 1852 there were 459 Protestant missionaries; in 1872 there were 606. In 1851 there were in India and Burma 222 mission stations; in 1881 the number rose to 601.* Notwithstanding all this missionary activity, Christianity has made but little impression upon Hinduism. Notwithstanding four centuries† of earnest preaching by Roman Catholics, and two centuries‡ of as earnest preaching by Protestants, notwithstanding the devotion,

not very successfull,

* These figures have been taken from Hunter's "Indian Empire" Second edition, p.p. 261-263.

† The first Catholic mission (properly so called) arrived from Portugal in 1500.

‡ The first Protestant missionaries were Lutherans who began their work in 1705 at the Danish Settlement of Tranquebar.

ability and self sacrifice of such men as St. Francis Xavier, de Nobili and Beschi amongst the Roman Catholics, and Schwartz, Carey, Duff, and Wilson, amongst the Protestants, there were in 1891 not more than 2,036,590 Indian Christians of all denominations out of a population of 287, 179, 715. It is true the number shows a fair increase on that of 1881. But the remarks of the Census Commissioner for Bengal apply generally to the whole of India: "In the great majority of districts the increase is due to the natural growth of people most of whose physical wants are carefully looked after by benevolent pastors, augmented by a few stray conversions."*

These remarks are perhaps a little too strong. Conversions not quite of a "stray" character do take place but only amongst the aborigines or the lowest ranks of the Hindu Society. In Bengal, for instance, the number of Christians for 1891 shows an increase of 63, 418 over that for 1881. But of this number, no less than 49, 281, were in the Chhota Nagpur Division, where mission work is chiefly carried on amongst the aborigines. About the middle of the present century, a good number of high-caste and educated Hindus embraced Christianity. But it soon after met with formidable opponents in the Bráhma and the A'rya samájes; and in the struggle that ensued, the latter triumphed. Within the last thirty years the progress of Christianity among the upper-class Hindus has been very insignificant.

especially amongst upper-class Hindus;

* "Census of India" (1891) Vol. III. p. 152.

Mr. H. J. S. Cotton in his "New India"* says: "Though here and there an educated native may have been brought to Christianity, the educated natives, as a body, have not been slow to perceive that the intellect of Europe is drifting away from the traditional religion. Whatever change may eventually be effected, the change from Hindooism to Christianity is perhaps the most improbable; the people will not accept it." Again: "The spread of education has enabled the people to bind together with more cohesion and unity against a form of proselytism they so much dislike, and conversions to Christianity otherwise than among famine remnants and occasionally among the aboriginal tribes are far less frequent than was formerly the case. During my eighteen years' experience of Bengal, I do not remember a single instance of the conversion of a respectable native gentleman to Christianity." There can be no doubt that Christianity amongst the upper-class Hindus has been on the wane for sometime past; and there are no signs

* *Op. cit* (London 1885) p.p. 156-159 It should be noted that education amongst the Indian Christians is relatively more widely spread than amongst the Hindus and Mahomedans. "In South India alone there were 44,225 native Christians at school and college, or 61 per cent of boys and 28 per cent of girls of a schoolgoing age, while the percentage of the Presidency, as a whole, is 23 of boys and 3 of girls. The native Christians are only a fortieth of the population, but more than 8 per cent of the students attending colleges and of the graduates of the University are native Christians." Dr. G. Smith, "Conversion of India" (1893) p. 229.

of its finding favor with them again. Whatever optimist

reasons why.

missionaries* may think, it is never likely to win many converts among the Hindus, and for the following reasons:

First. The pliability of Hinduism which has given it somewhat the character of an all-embracing religion. We have already adverted to this point. Mahomedanism has nothing new to present; for, Hinduism admits monotheism to be its very essence. Christianity too has hardly any spiritual idea to offer that is not to be met with in Hinduism. On its doctrinal side, Hinduism is almost invulnerable. It is armed with all the weapons of its opponents, offensive or defensive. It can oppose Faith to Faith, Love to Love, Revelation to Revelation, Sacrifice to Sacrifice.

Secondly. The caste-system. The survival of Hinduism as the religion of over two hundred millions of human beings in a high stage of civilisation is not solely attributable to its pliability.† Its social organisation, of which the caste-system is the principal factor, is also an important cause of its remarkable vitality.

* Says Bishop Caldwell: "To be almost a convert is the highest point many well-disposed Hindoos have reached at present. They are timidly waiting for a general movement which they will be able to join without personal risk; but the time may any day come when the masses of them will become not only almost, but altogether followers of Christ."

(Quoted in Dr. George Smith's "Conversion of India" p. 217.)

† A missionary of considerable Indian experience says: "Eclectic, elastic, willing to absorb every belief and cult that will tolerate its social system—Bráhmanism presents a greater difficulty than classical Paganism, if only because of caste." Dr. George Smith, Conversion of India" p. 219.

Hinduism has ever been, and still is as liberal and tolerent in matters of religious belief, as it is illiberal, and intolerent in matters of social conduct. Its religious pliability is in inverse ratio to its social rigidity. It is largely owing to the strictness of its caste-system, that comparatively so few Hindus have been converted to Christianity. To a Hindu conversion means separation from all that is nearest and dearest to him. If he be married, and his wife be unwilling to be converted with him he has to part from her, and sever all connections with home, with father, mother, brothers, and sisters. The convert is excommunicated; he is looked upon as something degraded. But, few Hindus would undergo all this sacrifice, unless they are convinced that they are changing their ancestral religion for something better; and such conviction is rendered very difficult by the all-embracing character of Hinduism.

But few conversions have ever been made to Christianity except from the lower classes who, kept down at a low level by the caste-system, are actuated by a desire for social betterment, when the way to it is shown by missionaries. The largest number of converts made to Christianity in recent times has been in times of famine. The number of high-caste converts has been, and still is, exceedingly small. The success of the earlier Roman Catholic missionaries was largely due to their recognition of caste. Xavier and de Nobili both endeavoured to construct an Indian church on the basis of caste organization. The earlier Protestant missionaries followed in the wake of the earlier Catholic missionaries,

and Schwartz no less than Xavier recognised caste. When in 1833, Bishop Wilson of Calcutta issued a circular forbidding caste observances in Protestant Churches, the Protestant caste-converts of Tanjore renounced their religion rather than violate caste.

Thirdly. The missionaries as a body are no doubt good, earnest men; and according to the standard of comfort of their society, they undoubtedly do not live luxuriously. Still what is simplicity to them is luxury to the Hindus. Their houses, their servants, their food, their horses, their carriages—though there is nothing extravagant in these according to English ideas—do not harmonise with the Hindu ideal of the life of a man of religion. From the time of Gautama the Buddha to the present day all Hindu preachers, all Hindu founders of sects (with the single exception of Vallábhácharya, the founder of the sect of Vallábhácháris) have been ascetics. The Hindus cannot reconcile the character of a holy man with that of a worldly man. To have any weight with them the preacher must undergo an amount of self-denial of which the Christian missionary has scarcely any conception.

The influence of Christianity upon Hinduism has, indeed, been very little. The supposition that Krishna-cult owed its origin to the contact of Christianity has been shown to be groundless. * The suspicion of Christian influence on the small but interesting sect

* See Barth's "Religions of India," pp. 219 et seq.

of the Tamil *Sittars* (wise ones) also rests upon slender grounds.

Human sacrifice,

The English Government has suppressed certain cruel rites which may be mentioned here. The earliest reference to the practice of human sacrifice in India occurs in the story of Sunahsepha told in the Aitareya Bráhmana, which is considered to be the Bráhmana portion of the Rigveda. Rájá Harischandra of the Ikshváku race who had no son prayed to Varuna for one. "Let a son be born unto me," he said, "and with him, I will sacrifice to you." "So be it" said Varuna, and a son was born to the king, who was named Rohita. Harischandra evaded fulfilling his promise under various pretexts until Rohita had been invested with arms. He then called his son and said "My child, Varuna gave you to me, and I have also promised to sacrifice with you to him." "By no means" said the young man ; and he went away to the forest where he wandered for some years. At last Rohita purchased from a Bráhman, named Ajígarta, his second son named Sunahsepha, for one hundred cows, and returning to his father said "Rejoice father, for with this youth shall I redeem myself." Harischandra made preparations for the sacrificial ceremony termed Rájasúya and appointed Sunahsepha to be the human victim. Sunahsepha was tied to the stake. But he did not like his situation and said :

"They will put me to death as if I were not a man." Then at the suggestion of Visvámitra, he prayed to a number of divinities to be released and was ultimately set free.* In the Satapatha Bráhmana of the Yajurveda mention is made of Purushamedha or sacrifice of man, in which one hundred and eightyfive men of various castes are bound to eleven posts, and after recitation of a hymn celebrating the allegorical immolation of Náráyana, they are liberated unhurt, and oblations of butter are offered on the sacrificial fire.† It would thus appear that if human sacrifices had ever been prevelant amongst the Indo-Aryans, an emblematical ceremony was substituted in their place sometime about the Bráhmana period. ‡

emblematical in the Bráhmana period.

In Puránic period, a section of the Sákta Hindus introduced human sacrifice called Narabali to the goddess variously named Deví, Chandiká, Chámundá, or Kálí—a dark,

Later Narabali.

* The story is given in full by Wilson, "Essays and Lectures" (1862) vol. II. pp. 250 ff.

† Colebrooke, "Miscellaneous essays" (1837). Vol. I p. 61.

‡ "By a human sacrifice attended by the forms laid down, Deví remains gratified for a thousand years, and by a sacrifice of three men one hundred thousand years. By human flesh the goddess Kámákhyá's consort Bhairava, ... remains pleased for three thousand years. Blood consecrated, immediately becomes ambrosia, and since the head and flesh are gratifying, therefore should the head and flesh be offered at the worship of the goddess. The wise should also add the flesh free from hair among food offerings." The Káliká Purána quoted in Rájendra Lála Mitra's "Indo-Aryans" vol II. p. 106.

fierce, hideous, blood-thirsty deity, "who is represented in the most awful forms, not unoften dressed in human palms, garlanded with a string of human skulls, holding a skull by the hair in one hand, and an uplifted sabre in the other, and having her person stained with patches of human gore."*

* Narabali was probably borrowed from the practice of such non-Aryan tirbes as the Kandhs.

"The Kandhs, like the Santáls, have many deities, race-gods, tribe-gods, family-gods, and a multitude of malignant spirits and demons. But their great divinity is the Earth-god, who represents the productive energy of nature. Twice each year, at sowing time and at harvest, and in all seasons of special calamity, the Earth-god required a human sacrifice (Meriah). The duty of providing the victims rested with the lower race attached to the Kandah village. Brahmans and Kandhs were the only classes exempted from sacrifice, and an ancient rule ordained that the offering *must be bought with a price.* Men of the lower race kidnapped the victims from the plains. and a thriving Kandh village usually kept a small stock in reserve, 'to meet sudden demands for atonement.' The victim, on being brought to the hamlet, was welcomed at every threshold, daintly fed, and kindly treated till the fatal day arrived He was then solemnly sacrificed to the Earth-god, the Kandhs shouting in his dying ear, 'We bought you with a price; no sin rests with us?' His flesh and blood were distributed among the village lands.

In 1835, the Kandhs passed under our rule, and these rites had to cease. The proud Kandh spirit shrank from compulsion; but after many tribal councils, they agreed to give up their stock of victims as a valuable present to their new suzerain. Care was taken that they should not procure fresh ones. The Kidnapping of victims for human sacrifice was declared a capital offence; and their priests were led to discover that goats or buffaloes did quite as well for the Earth-god under British rule as human sacrifices." (Hunter's "Indian Empire" p. 62).

The Kálikápurána says :—

"Next should be performed such sacrifice as is gratifying to the Deví. The elephant-headed (Ganes) should be gratified with sweetmeats; Hari with clarified butter, *(Habis)*, (the word may be rendered into rice, fruits, &c.); the all-destroying Hara, with the three-fold entertainment (of dancing, singing, and music); but the worshipper should always gratify Chandiká with animal sacrifice. Birds, tortoises, crocodiles, hogs, goats, buffaloes, guanos, porcupines, and the nine kinds of deer, yaks, black antilopes, crows, lions, fishes, the blood of one's own body, and camels are the sacrificial animals. In the absence of these sometimes horses and elephants, goats, sarabha, (a young elephant or a fabulous animal with eight legs,) and human beings in the order in which they are named, are respectively called *Bali* (sacrifice), *Mahabali* (the great sacrifice), and *Atibali* (highest sacrifice). Having placed the victim before the goddess, the worshipper should adore her by offering flowers, sandal paste, and bark, frequently repeating the mantra appropriate for sacrifice. Then, facing the north and placing the victim so as to face the East, he should look backward and repeat this mantra: 'O man, through my good fortune thou hast appeared as a victim; therefore I salute thee; thou multiform, and of the form of a victim. Thou, by gratifying Chandiká destroyeth all evil incidents to the giver. Thou, a victim, who appeareth as a sacrifice meet for the Vaishnaví, havest my salutations. Victims were created by the self-born himself for sacrificial rites; I shall slaughter thee to-day, and slaughter at a sacrifice is no murder.'—Then meditating on that human-formed victim a flower should be thrown on the top of its head with the mantra 'Om, Aiñ, Hriñ, Sriñ. Then, thinking of one's own wishes, and referring to the goddess, water should be sprinkled on the victim."

Human sacrifices must always have been very rare; they were against law under the Mahomedan Rule. Since the establishment of the British Rule, stricter Police supervision has made them still rarer. In some Sákta families, the practice of sacrificing a man in effigy still reminds one of the now almost obsolete rite. The effigy is about a foot in length, and is made of milk dried to solidity. A few mantras are recited

to vivify the image, which is then sacrificed according to the formula laid down in the Káliká Purána for human sacrifice. But, as Rájendralála Mitra observes, "persons are not wanting who suspect that there are still nooks and corners in India where human victims are occasionally slaughtered for the gratification of the Deví."* During the dearth of 1866, in a temple dedicated to Káli, within one hundred miles of Calcutta, "a boy was found with his neck cut, the eyes staring open, and the stiff clotted tongue thrust out between the teeth. In another temple at Hugli (a railway station only 25 miles from Calcutta, the head was left before the idol decked with flowers." †

Besides *Narabali* to *Chandiká*, human victims used to be occasionally offered in pre-British times for the propitiation of minor divinities, specially among the aboriginal classes, whenever a newly excavated tank failed to yield the expected supply of water or a harvest failed. In order to avert possible accidents, the foundations of important buildings were sometimes laid in human blood. The memory of such sacrifices still survives; and scarcely any important bridge has been constructed in recent times without its giving rise to a scare in its vicinity that some human victims would be sacrificed.

* Rájendralála Mitra, *op. cit.* p. 108

† *The Indian Empire* (Second Edition) by W. W. Hunter, p. 212; see also Ward's "Hindus" Vol. II p. 261.

Infanticide

Infanticide has been prevalent among the Hindus in two forms, of which one chiefly confined to the Rájputs, consisted in the destruction of new-born daughters through the apprehension that suitable matches would not be obtained for them.* The ordinance of the Hindu Sástras, that girls must be married, and that too before they attain maturity, always makes Hindu parents anxious on their account. The anxiety is intensified if the parents have not the means to marry their daughters suitably and with becoming pomp. The advent of a daughter, therefore, is often not very welcome in the household of a high-caste Hindu; the rejoicings which take place on the birth of a son are dispensed with when a daughter is born. The lower classes and the Hinduised aborigines, among whom the father of the daughter gains pecuniarily by her marriage, do not of course, look upon her as an unwelcome visitor.

Killing of new-born daughters among Rájputs &c.

Among several of the higher castes, especially the Rájputs, the morbid anxiety caused by the birth of a daughter has been so great as to lead to infanticide on a large scale. In 1856, an officer was appointed to investigate the matter. He states in his report, "that in the villages visited by him, in 26 out of 308 not a single girl under six years of age existed. In another batch of 38 villages he did not find a single girl; marriages were very rare there and in some places were

* This form of infanticide is treated of here for the sake of convenience. Its proper place is the next Book.

not known to have taken place within the recollecetion of the present generation. In another instance there was not a girl over six, and no marriage had taken place there for over eighty years In many parts of the Benares Division he also found that marriages had not taken place within the memory of the present generation." Other officers in other districts had a similar experience. "Among the Rajputs it appears to be customary to destroy the infant immediately upon its birth; the mothers of the Rajkumar infants simply starve them to death. In other cases they are poisoned with the juice of mádár plant, tobacco, or Dhatura; or the child was strangled immediately it was born. In Benares it was a common practice to drown them in milk after a prayer had been offered that they might come again in the form of sons, whilst in other places, again, the newly-born infant was buried alive, or left exposed in the jungle." *

Steps taken for its suppression.

Punitive measures have been adopted by Government for the suppression of this form of infanticide; and earnest indigenous efforts are being made to strike at its very root, that is, to remove its real causes,—infant marriage and heavy marriage-expenses. The steps which have been adopted for raising the marriageable age of girls will be mentioned in the next Book. Here we shall briefly refer to the measures which have been adopted for the reduction of the marriage-expenses. Several

* Quoted by W. J. Wilkins, "Modern Hinduism" p. 433." See also *Calcutta Review*, Vol. I, pp. 372 *et seq.*

associations have been formed in Northern India having this as one of their principal objects. Of these the Káyastha Conference and the Walterkrit Rájputra Hitakáriní Sabhá are the principal. The former passed the following resolutions at a meeting held at Bareilly during the Christmas week in 1891 :—

"That, in the opinion of the Conference, the following means among others are suitable for the curtailment of extravagant expenses in marriages and on other festive occasions.

(1.) That every member of the community individually, and every Sabhá collectively should prepare a list of such expenses as, in his or its opinion, require curtailment or total abandonment; that such lists be published in the national papers, and a copy thereof be forwarded to the Provincial Sabhá Office; that an abstract thereof be read at the General Meeting of the Provincial Sabhá, and subsequently circulated widely in the community.

(2.) That every Sabhá and Sub-Division of the community should prepare a Dastur-al-Amal (code of rules and bye-laws to regulate expenses in marriages, &c.), and enforce it within its jurisdiction or Sub-Division; that these Dastur-ul-Amals be published in the national papers, and a copy thereof be forwarded to the Provincial Sabhá; that an abstract of these Dastur-ul-Amals be appended to the Provincial Sabhá report; and that, when a sufficient number of them have been received, a draft Dastur-ul-Amal be prepared for general enforcement, and be read at the annual meeting of the Provincial Sabhá, and when approved by the latter, be published and widely circulated.

(3.) That expenses be limited, 1st with respect to the average annual income, (*e. g.*, not more than six month's income should be spent on the marriage of a son, one year's on that of a daughter, and so on); or 2nd with respect to grades of marriages, (*e. g.*, in the first class, marriage expenses may not exceed Rs. 1,000; in the second, Rs. 500; and in the third, Rs. 150); or 3rd that expenses on the different ceremonies be laid down at certain amounts which should not be exceeded, (*e. g.*, Rs. 5 for *Barrichha*, Rs. 50 for *Tilak*, and so on).

N. B.—The examples given above are only illustrative, and not

authoritative; regard should be had only to the principles underlying them.

(4.) That members and office bearers of the Sabhá should try their best to see within their respective jurisdictions that the rules thus framed are not violated; they should adopt all persuasive means to induce people to conform to them, *e. g.*, they should join their feasts, explain to them the advantages of their action, and otherwise use their influence to check breaches of the rules.

(5.) That in the first instance pressure be brought to bear on people of position and wealth, and the office-bearers of the Sabhás should take the lead in observing the rules.

(6.) That gentlemen conforming to the Dastur-ul-Amals promulgated by the Sabhás should be publicly honoured; and their names favorably noticed in the national papers, and further, their names should be recorded in a register kept for the purpose and read at the annual meeting.

(7.) That with a view to attract the attention of the community and the Sabhás towards the enforcement of the several methods indicated above, short pamphlets should be published pointing out the evils of extravagant expenses on marriages, and be distributed gratuitously."

From the annual report of the Rájputra Hitakáriní Sabhá it appears, that the rules prescribed by the Sabhá for the reduction of marriage-expenses have been generally adopted throughout Rájputáná.

A large meeting convened by the Sirdars of the Punjab was held in the Town Hall of Ludhiáná, on 8th October 1888, at which rules were framed, to be binding not only on the Sirdars and Raises, but on the whole Ját community. The following enactments were then passed :—

Every Ját to be bound by the Code. He might spend less than the authorised amount, but not more.

Parents are, themselves, to personally inquire into the age and other qualifications of the boy and girl before betrothal, and are not to leave these duties to *lagis* (barbers and Brahmans).

At the time of marriage the boy is not to be under nineteen years of age, or the girl under fourteen (except in particular cases).

Parents of girls are forbidden to receive any gratuity or present whatever, under any pretence, in consideration of the marriage of their daughter.

The following are the proportions of annual income which may be spent on marriages. Everyone is at liberty to spend less, but not more :—

(*a*) A person with an annual income of Rs. 100, or less, may spend at the rate of 60 per cent.

(*b*) A person having an income of more than Rs. 100 and not exceeding Rs. 500, may spend 50 per cent.

(*c*) A person with an income between Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 may spend 40 per cent.

(*d*) One with an income between Rs. 1000 and Rs. 5000 may spend a third of one year's income.

(*e*) One receiving an income between Rs. 5000 and Rs. 20,000 may expend at the rate of 30 per cent.

(*f*) One whose annual income exceeds Rs. 20,000 is limited to 25 per cent. *

The Sixth National Social Conference passed the following resolution :—

"That in the opinion of this Conference, it is necessary to curtail marriage and ceremonial expenses, and the Conference recommends each community to lay down fixed scales of such expenses, and provide measures for the enforcement of their rules."

Infanticide in fulfilment of vows suppressed.

The other form of Infanticide was in fulfilment of vows made by parents to offer their first born babes to the sacred river, the Ganges (Bhágirathí, principally

* *The Indian Magazine* (London) December, 1890.

at its junction with the sea at the Saugar island. *
The children thrown into the water were sometimes rescued by priests or other bystanders who brought them up. But sometimes they were drowned or devoured by sharks. In 1805, the practice was declared to be murder punishable with death. Ward mentions a horrible custom, happily now unknown, which in his time (*i.e.* in the earlier years of the present century) prevailed in some of the northern districts of Bengal. If an infant refused the mother's breast and declined in health, it was said to be possessed by some malignant spirit. Such a child was sometimes put into a basket and suspended in a tree where this evil spirit was supposed to reside but it was fed and clothed daily. If it was found alive at the expiration of three days, the mother received it back home and nursed it, but the child often died. †

Self-immolation.

Self-immolation is an ancient practice in India. The rite of *Mahâprasthâna* which required one to walk into the sea and drown himself survived till the beginning of the present century. Cases of self-immolation by drowning were by no means rare at the confluence of the Bhâgirathí with the sea. Effective measures were taken in 1805 to stop the practice along with infanticide. Another form of self-immolation required the sinner to enter a blazing

* Râjendralâla Mitra traced the offering of infants to Gangâ to the sacrifice of Sunasepha to the water-goddess Varuna.

† Ward's "History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindus" (Second Edition 1815) Vol. II p. 319.

pyre *(tushánala)*, and burn himself to death. It is what Calanus performed in the presence of Alexander the Great.

The following cases of self-immolation are cited by Ward: "About the year 1790, a young man of the order of Dandí, took up his abode at Kakshalu, a village near Nadiyá, for a few months, and began to grow very corpulent. Reflecting that a person of his order was bound to a life of mortification, and feeling his passions grow stronger and stronger, he resolved to renounce his life in the Ganges; he requested his friends to assist in this act of self-murder, and they supplied him with a boat, some cord and two waterpans. He then proceeded on the boat into the middle of the stream, and, filling the pans with water, fastened one to his neck, and the other round his loins, and in this manner descended into the water—to rise no more!—in the presence of a great multitude of applauding spectators. A few years after this another Dandí, while suffering under a fever renounced his life in the Ganges at Nadiyá; and nearly at the same time a Dandi at Ariáda, about four miles from Calcutta, in a state of indisposition refusing all medical aid (in which indeed he acted according to the rules of his order) cast himself into the river from a boat, and thus renounced life."*

In such cases, the line of demarcation between self-immolation and suicide is not very sharp. Death under the wheels of the car of Jagannáth was sought for cen-

* Ward, *op cit*, Vol. II p. 315.

turies before the incorporation of Orissa with the British territory.. But the number of such cases of self-immolation was very small, and they were chiefly confined to "diseased and miserable objects who took this means to put themselves out of pain".* Until 1824, devotees used to precipitate themselves over the Birkhalá rocks, at the eastern end of the Island of Mandáptá or Omkárji, on to the river brink where the terrible deity, Kála Bhairava, resided.†

Self-inflicted tortures: blood-offering,

The offering of one's blood to the bloodthirsty goddess, Chandiká, appears to be a comparatively modern rite confined to women. "There is scarcely a respectable house in all Bengal," says Rájendralála Mitra "the mistress of which has not at one time or other, shed her blood, under the notion of satisfying the goddess by the operation. Whenever her husband or a son is dangerously ill, a vow is made that on the recovery of the patient, the goddess would be regaled with human blood, and on the first Durgá Pújá following, or at the temple at Kálíghát, or at some other sacred fane the lady performs certain ceremonies, and then bares her breast in the presence of the goddess, and with a nail cutter *(naruna)* draws a few drops of blood from between her busts, and offers them to the divinity. The

* Hunter's "Orissa" (1872) Vol. I. p. 134.
† "Central Provinces Gazetteer", p. 259.

last time I saw the ceremony was six years ago, when my late revered parent, tottering with age, made the offering for my recovery from a dangerous and long-protracted attack of pleurisy".* The practice of votaries cutting out their tongues and offering them to the Deví at Jválámukhí appears to have been by no means uncommon in the earlier years of the present century. It was also not unknown at Kálighát near Calcutta. †

Hook-swinging,

The hook-swinging and attendant barbarities were put a stop to in Bengal by legislation in 1863. When they came into existence is not exactly known. But that they were of non-Aryan orgin there can be little doubt. The fact that they were, and in some parts still are, practised by low castes only points to this conclusion. A few days previous to the Charak Pújá, which is celebrated on the last day of the month of Chaitra, able-bodied, vigorous men belonging to such castes assume the character of devotees (*sannyásís*) They live upon plantains, clarified butter and similar food. On the first day some of them throw themselves down from a platform upon knives so ranged as to do but litte harm. They parade the streets, dancing to the music of drums and tomtoms, and exhibiting various feats, such as playing with pointed iron rods piercing their tongues or arms. The barbarities culminate on the day of the Charak Pújá in the swinging of a few chosen

* "Indo-Aryans", Vol. II, pp. 111—112.

† Ward "History, &c. of the Hindoos," (1815) Vol. II. p. 232. (foot note).

sannyásís suspended from a cross beam fixed high on a pole by hooks piercing the muscles of the back. Sannyásís are still swung on the occasion of the Charak Pújá, but in Bengal in a more harmless way. When the orders of Government prohibiting the barbarities practised during the Pújá were carried out in the district of Bírbhum some of the lower caste people "assembled round the poles and foretold famine from the loss of their old propitiatory rites. As they thought the spring ceremonies absolutely essential before commencing tillage, the British officer suggested they might swing a man by a rope round his waist instead of with a hook through his back. This compromise was accepted by some, but the better-informed cultivators gloomily assured the officer that the ceremonies would have no good effect on the crops without the spilling of blood." *

Indirect English influence on Hinduism.

The indirect influence of the English environment chiefly exerted through English schools has been incomparably greater than the direct Governmental suppression of such inhuman practices as we have just described. This influence has principally been in the same direction as the influence of the Mahomedan environment— viz. in the direction of monotheism and social equality. Neo-Hinduism and some of the recent sects which we shall treat of in subsequent chapters are largely attributable to this influence.

* "Indian Empire," p. 213.

CHAPTER III.

NEO-HINDUISM

Hinduism as a social organisation,

All religions govern more or less the social life of their followers; but no religion in the world probably does so to the same extent as Hinduism. Hinduism, in fact, is more a social than a religious organisation. It includes all shades of faith—monotheism, pantheism, agnosticism, atheism, polytheism, and fetishism. So long as a Hindu conforms to the customs and practices of his society he may believe what he likes. The movements of secession from Hinduism from the time of Gautuma have been as much of a social as of a religious character. Such sects as the Kabirpanthis and the Chhattisgarí Satnámis, were essentially socialistic upheavals. Their founders were of low caste; their members are mostly, if not solely, of low caste. The cardinal difference between Bráhmaism and Hin-

duism is more of a social than of a religious nature. The members of the Prárthaná Samájes of Bombay, though monotheists like those of the Bráhma Samájes of Bengal, are nevertheless Hindus, because they are still within the pale of Hindu society. The followers of Dayánanda Sarasvatí are as much monotheists as the Bráhmas. Both are equally against idolatry. But the A'ryas are Hindus because they respect the social organisation of the Hindus. Some of the Hindu customs and practices are variable. They have varied with time. They are not the same now as they were in the Vedic period, or even the period of the Manusamhitá. Beef was then an approved article of food; it is now to the Hindus what pork is to the Jews or Mahomedans. There is also considerable local variation; Hindu usages in Bengal are not exactly the same as Hindu usages in Bombay, Madras or the Punjab. Bengal Bráhmans delight in fish and certain kinds of flesh. But these articles of food are forbidden to Mahratta and North-Western Bráhmans. But, there are certain practices which are universal all over India; and the most important of these are connected with the institutions of caste and marriage. All these customs, variable or invariable, local or universal, derive their sanction from a mysterious body of works collectively known as the *Sástras*. The Sástras are on the lips of every Hindu, though but few know exactly what they comprise. Most of the important reformations in India have had as one of their important objects

based on the authority of the Sástras.

the confutation of the Sástras. Buddha, Kabir and Nának expressed but little regard for the authority of the Sástras. A large section of the educated Hindus claim to interpret the Sástras in the light of reason, and to disregard them altogether when they clash with their modern ideas of progress. As we shall presently see, they have no special creed. They are Hindus; they have not broken away with the parent religion as the Buddhists, the Kabirpanthis, and the Sikhs have done. The movement is, however, none the less important. When we bear in mind how intimately the social organisation of the Hindus is connected with their religion, how social heresy is often severely punished in Hindu society, whereas religious heresy is as often overlooked, the movement assumes an importance deserving of special treatment. It is altogether a new one amongst the Hindus. There has been social heterodoxy before now, but never on such a large scale. The Neo-Hindu movement, as we shall call it, is a very widespread one. It counts amongst its followers educated men from all parts of India. It has already passed its inceptive stage. The Hindu reformers meet annually to confer together their plan of operations. In the next Book we shall treat of the reforms initiated by them. Suffice to say here, that they are of a far-reaching character comprising as they do reforms of the caste and marriage customs which are considered of greater importance by orthodox Hindus than any rite or form of worship.

The sástras rationally interpreted.

Numerical strength of the Neo-Hindus.

It is difficult to estimate the number of the Neo-Hindus. But it must be very large, comprising as it does, conjecturally of course, a good portion of the educated men all over the Empire. The dissemination of English education has spread ideas which hitherto have been the exclusive property of the thoughtful and cultured few. The idea of the brotherhood of man and similar ideas which strike at the foundation of the Hindu social polity have been known and preached in India from the remotest times. But it is owing mainly to English education that they now pervade nearly all ranks of the Hindu society ; and the wide diffusion of the Neo-Hindu movement is mainly referable to this cause.

Neo-Hindus, conservative and radical;

With regard to the breach of social observances, the great majority of the Neo-Hindus, adopt a policy of caution,* and do not go beyond the point that would be tolerated by their society ; there are a few, on

* The President of the Sixth Social Conference, The Hon'ble Rámkáli Chaudhuri, made the following observations :—

"Now what are we to do in introducing reforms in our social condition? In our zeal for reform let us not lose patience. If we conceive what reforms we should have, let us not take action at once. We thereby alienate our less advanced countrymen from the ways we aspire to adopt, and our failure is the consequence. The first step in our procedure, as far as I am able to judge, is to create a widely spread public opinion in favour of reform. This, I know, requires an immense deal of talk, for which we are subjected to so much taunting criticism. But ignoring such taunts we should strenuously go on to convert gradually the minds of our countrymen. I know a great deal of time—perhaps

the other hand, consisting chiefly of persons who have been to the West either for travel or education, who are less cautious. The former may be distinguished as conservative, and the latter as radical Neo-Hindus. A very large number of the conservative Neo-Hindus openly break the caste rules about food and drink, * and the toleration of the Hindu society in this direction is gradually increasing.

the period of a generation or two—is required for such conversion. Our people—even of the lowest class—are, however, very intelligent; and the English education—thanks to the Government we are placed under—is doing us great help in this respect, and we are sure to succeed in this first step of cur procedure."

(Report of the Sixth National Social Conference. Printed at Poona, 1893).

* We are aware of numerous such instances, but shall content ourselves by citing a few of the more prominent ones. At the table of the late Rájá Digambar Mitra, who, for sometime, was a member of the Legislative Council of Bengal, the Mahomedan, the Christian, the England-returned Hindu were equally welcome. He "felt no caste scruples to send his son to England, or take him back into the family on his return." Rámgopal Ghose also abrogated caste as regards food. Yet they both celebrated the Durgá Pujá. "Life of Raja Digambar Mitra" by Bholanath Chunder. Calcutta. 1893 pp. 267, 269.) Justice Dwáraká Náth Mitra used to dine with the Governor General, the Lieutenant Governor, and other high officials. Yet as regards ceremonial observances he was a Hindu. He married after his elevation to the Bench and after he had declared himself a Positivist, and gave his daughter in marriage in the Hindu way. ("Life of Dwáraká Náth Mitter" by Dinabandhu Sanyal).

their attitude towards social reform;

Quite recently, the *Indian Social Reformer* (a Madras paper). setting forth the vegetarianism of Mr. A. O. Hume (one of the leaders of the National Congress) who, it declared, can well be compared to a Rishi, challenged the Hindus to recognise this fact by eating with him. The challenge was responded to by some thirteen Madrasi Hindus who joined together and invited Mr. Hume to a dinner. It was prepared by a Hindu cook, and served in thorough Hindu style on plantain leaves, which were arranged in two rows, Mr. Hume squatting on the floor along with the others and eating out of his leaf. He was, however, allowed the use of spoons and forks. Except in the matter of food, the majority of the conservative Neo-Hindus are very cautious in effecting social reforms, though many of them earnestly advocate them. At the National Social Conference held in Allahabad on 31st December, 1893, it was for instance resolved, "that in the opinion of the Conference neither distant sea-voyages nor residence in foreign countries should by themselves involve loss of caste." One gentleman proposed to add—"provided that no rules or regulations of the caste are violated." The amendment was lost, and the substantive proposition carried by a large majority.* Of this majority, however, but few would or could carry the resolution into practice. Similar unwillingness or inability to take

* "Report of the Sixth National Social Conference." Poona, 1893. p.p. 11-15.

immediate action is observable with regard to the following and several other resolutions which also were passed at the Conference:—

'That, in the opinion of the Conference, it is essential that the marriageable age of boys and girls should be raised, and that all castes should fix minima varying from 18 to 21 for boys and 12 to 14 for girls according to their circumstances, the final irrevocable marriage rite *(saptapadi* or *phera)* being postponed till the bride becomes 14 years old.'

their religious creed,

In religious belief a few of the Neo-Hindus are agnostics, and positivists. Some are monotheists. Many more are in a state of unsettled belief; a few years ago the number of such Hindus was much larger than at present. But a reaction has latterly set in. Men who began life as scoffers or Bráhmas are ending it by being staunch Vaishnavas.* Several of the foremost missionaries of the most advanced Bráhma sect in Bengal have reverted to Hinduism. The progress of Bráhmaism is slower than before. Keshab Chandra Sen, its most renowned exponent went back a long way towards Hinduism in his latter days. The New Dispensation is said to have been the result of the influence of an illiterate Hindu devotee of singular piety. The influence exerted by this man upon many of the educated

* Bijayakrishna Goswámi, for many years a most enthusiastic missionary of the Bráhma Samáj, has recently gone back to Hinduism. The writer is aware of numerous instances of a similar nature.

men of Bengal is a remarkable fact. Protápa Chandra Mozumdar the leader of a section of the Bráhma Samáj thus writes of him : "My mind is still floating in the luminous atmosphere which that wonderful man diffuses around him whenever and wherever he goes. My mind is not yet disenchanted of the mysterious and indefinable pathos which he pours into it whenever he meets me. What is there common between him and me? I, a Europeanized, civilized, self-centred, semi-sceptical, so-called educated reasoner, and he, a poor, illiterate, shrunken, unpolished, diseased, half-idolatrous, friendless Hindu devotee? Why should I sit long hours to attend to him? I, who have listened to Disraeli and Fawcett, Stanley and Max Muller, and a whole host of European scholars and divines ; I, who am an ardent disciple and follower of Christ, a friend and admirer of liberal-minded Christian missionaries and preachers, a devoted adherent and worker of the rationalistic Bráhmo Somaj,—why should I be spell-bound to hear him? And it is not I only, but dozens like me who do the same. He has been interviewed and examined by many ; crowds pour in to visit and talk with him."* Rámkrishna Paramhamsa is now worshipped as an *avatára* not by illiterate people, but by graduates and under-graduates among whom is a chemist † of local repute. One of Rámkrishna's disciples, Swámí Vivekánanda, took a prominent part in

* *The Theistic Quarterly Review*, 1879, reprinted as a pamphlet by the followers of Rámkrishna.

† This gentleman in his "Life of Rámkrishna" (Bengali) says, that before he came into contact with the Paramhansa he was an agnostic.

the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. He is reported to have created quite a sensation there by his religious fervour and eloquence. In the earlier days of English education the very idea of such a thing as practising *Yoga*, or becoming the follower of an illiterate Bráhman would have been laughed at with derision.

The first effect of English education at least in Bengal was to create a revulsion of feeling against the thraldom of caste and the domination of a hereditary priesthood. Three score years ago not a few of the English-educated Bengalis were aggressively hostile towards Hinduism. It was not enough for some of them to show their absence of caste-prejudice by taking beef; they must needs throw the bones into the houses of inoffensive Hindus. The ties that had bound them to their society were suddenly and violently broken; and the rebound was very great. To them Hinduism was the synonym for superstition and ignorance. They were mostly without any religious faith until Bráhmaism called a good number of them within its folds. That was thirty years ago. Within the last fifteen years another change has come at least over Bengal. Bráhmaism is now on the decline, and Neo-Hinduism is becoming the creed of educated India. *

* The Hindus of Bombay and Madras have not passed through the religious phases we have indicated above. They have always been more cautious and conservative than their co-religionists in Bengal. Their zeal for monotheistic worship, at least in Bombay, has not gone beyond Prárthaná Samájes, the members of which are to all intents and purposes Neo-Hindus of the conservative type.

The Neo-Hindus pass by almost insensible stages, on the one hand to the Bráhmas, and on the other to the orthodox Hindus. Those of them who are of the radical type and who are also monotheists differ from the Bráhmas chiefly in not congregating for worship. On the other hand there are Neo-Hindus like the late Justice Telang of Bombay who differ but little from the orthodox Hindus. Between these two extremes of Hinduism, there are various shades of religious belief and of readiness for social reform. *

Circumstances favourable to Neo-Hinduism; Oriental research;

The circumstances which have contributed to bring about the recent reaction in favour of Hinduism are various. The researches of Oriental Scholars like Colebrooke, Wilson, Max Muller, Weber, and Lassen and their presentation in popular and accessible forms by such writers as Rájendralála Mitra and Romesh Chunder Dutt may be noted as one of these circumstances. Most Hindus now know the history of their religion, at least in a general way. They know that

* There are men like the late Bamkima Chunder Chatterji, the greatest novelist that India has produced, who may be said to belong to the moderate section of the Neo-Hindus. Bamkima Chandra believed in the Divinity of Krishna. He was however, so far rationalistic, that he would interpret the Hindu Sástras in the light of his reason and education. He expressed himself strongly against the present system of caste. With regard to distant sea-voyage his pronouncement in its favour was still stronger.

Vedic or Upanishadic Hinduism was quite different from the Hinduism of the present day. While they are able now to rate at their proper value the Sástras which have hitherto been invested with the authority of revelation, they find that for their spiritual progress they need not go beyond the bounds of their ancestral religion. Hinduism is rather a collective name for a group of religions. The path pointed by Vaishnavism is different from the path pointed by Saivism ; both of these again, differ from the path pointed by Vedantism. Yet all who follow these and other paths are Hindus. There is probably no religion in the world which allows so much freedom of religious conviction and the literature of which is so many-sided as Hinduism. Educated Hindus whether they be pantheists, monotheists, agnostics, or positivists, whether they seek for Salvation in the path of Knowledge, of Faith, or of Love, can find light and guidance in some part or other of the rich literature of their ancestors which has now been placed within their reach by the labours of Sanskrit scholars. They can now take a comprehensive view of all religions and criticise them. *

* "My answer" says Dr. Bhandarkar "to the second class of persons spoken of before [Christian Missionaries] who have placed before us a religion which they say was alone revealed by God in all its parts at a certain period in the history of man, and who call upon us to accept it on that ground, also rests similarly on the basis supplied to us by the critical method. Christianity is not the only religion professed by man ; Hinduism, Buddhism, Mahomedanism, and a variety of other religions have flourished in the world, and are still flourishing. Are these the work of self-deception ? If we say so, we shall simply be playing into the hands of the opponents of all religion. What are the special claims

Theosophy ;

The Theosophical movement is also said to have directed the attention of the educated Hindus to their own religion. The Theosophical Society was founded at New York in 1875. The objects of the society are thus stated in one of its publications :—

First.—To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

Second.—To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions and sciences.

Third.—A third object—pursued by a portion only of the members of the Society—is to investigate un-

of one of these religions to be considered as the only revelation ? There is truth in all, and all have something objectionable which the light received from the others should enable us to discover and cast side. All have been revealed by God, but man, from the very weakness of his apprehension, has mixed a great deal of falsehood with the truth communicated to him by his Father. It certainly is not consistent with our ideas of God's love for man to think Him to have communicated that truth which it is so important for men to know, only at a late period in the history of the world, and only to a certain people. If religion is of supreme importance to man, we must expect that it should have been revealed to him in the very beginning, implanted by God in his very nature so that wherever he went he might carry it with him like his shadow. And thia is what we actually find. Man has been carrying religious belief like his shadow wherever he goes ; religion is as widely spread as humanity itself. Thus, then, God's revelation to man was made not only at a certain period in the world's history,but it began with the dawning of human intelligence, and went on progressing through all ages, and it is going on still and will go on. God is ever with us, communicating more and more of His truth to us as our powers of apprehension become purer and keener.—Anniversary Address at the Puna Prárthaná Samáj. Miss Collet. "Brahmo Year Book for 1882" p. 51.

explained laws of nature and the psychical powers of man.

No person's religious opinions are asked upon his joining, nor is interference with them permitted, but every one is required, before admission, to promise to show towards his fellow-members the same tolerance in this respect as he claims for himself. It would seem that occultism does not form a part of the present programme of the Theosophical Society. The "phenomena" of Madame Blavatsky brought so many misfortunes on the society that she was eventually led to give them up; and there does not appear to be any indication of that kind of work being revived.

Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, the founders of the society, came to India about 1880, and within a few years succeeded in founding branches of the Theosophical Society at various places all over India. The present headquarters of the society are at Adyar, Madras. In its report for 1892, its Indian branches are classified under four heads. In the first class comprising those which are really doing active work there are five branches—Bangalore, Bombay, Cumbaconum, Ludhiana, and Surat. In the second class, which includes those that are "working fairly well," there are fifteen branches. Not less than seventy-one branches are mentioned as doing but little beyond paying their annual due; among them are Calcutta, Allahabad and Nagpur. Fifty-four branches are noted as "entirely dormant."* From these

* *The Theosophist.* Vol XIV. No. 4, January, 1893.

facts it would appear that Theosophy, in India at least. is already on the decline. But, from the number of the Theosophical Societies which sprung up in different parts of India, between 1880 and 1888, one would be inclined to suppose that the influence of Theosophy at one time was considerable.

Sanskrit learning;

The revival of Sanskrit learning since the establishment of the three Presidency Universities in 1858, has also been among the contributory causes of the growth of Neo-Hinduism. The English educated scholars of pre-University times seldom learnt Sanskrit. The battle between the Anglicists and the Orientalists in the beginning of the present century was won by the former; and in the course of education prescribed by them, Sanskrit had no place. Before 1858, Sanskrit was taught only in the Sanskrit Colleges of Calcutta and Benares. But now Sanskrit is taught in all Colleges and higher-class Schools. Not a few of the English educated youths like the late Ánanda Ram Barua are good Sanskrit scholars. Their Sanskrit education has enabled them to take the key to the sacred treasures bequeathed to them by their ancestors from the hands of a coterie of learned Pandits. Their English education has enabled them to sift those treasures and select the valuable and useful from the now valueless and useless.

National feeling.

There has of late been apparent among the educated Hindus a feeling of nationality. It is clearly discernible even in those who have left their national costume, and who are not

unoften denounced as denationalised. In one form it is manifested in the National Congress; in another form it is manifested in the rationalistic Hinduism of the educated Hindus. Feeling as they do now, that they belong to a great and historic nation, they are proud to attach themselves to the historic religion of that nation. They are even gradually assuming an attitude of superiority towards the other religions, Christianity included. At the late Parliament of Religions at Chicago there were several Hindus present; and no one appears to have made a greater impression on the Americans than Swámi Vivekánanda. * The following is an extract from a Chicago newspaper published in the *Indian Mirror*, Dec. 7, 1893.

"Dr. Noble then presented Swámi Vivekánanda, the Hindu monk, who was applauded loudly as he stepped forward to the centre of the platform. He wore an orange robe, bound with a scarlet sash, and a pale yellow turban. The customary smile was on his handsome face and his eyes shone with animation. Said he:—

"Much has been said on the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture my own theory. But if any one here hopes that this unity would come by the triumph of any one of these religions and the destruction of the others, to him, I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible hope." Do I wish that the Christian would become Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or Buddhist would become Christian? God forbid."

"The seed is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it assimilates the air, the earth, and the water,

* His real name is Narendra Nath Datta. He is a graduate of the Calcutta University.

converts them into plant-substance and grows a plant. Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each religion must assimilate the others and yet preserve its individuality and grow according to its own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world, it is this, that it has proved to the world that holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character.

In the face of this evidence if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion would soon be written, in spite of their resistance, Help, and not Fight, Assimilation, and not Destruction, Harmony and Peace, and not Dissension."

On another occasion, Swámi Vivekánanda spoke as follows:—"You, Christians, who are so fond of sending out Missionaries to save the souls of the heathen, why do you not try to save their bodies from starvation? You erect churches all through India, but the crying evil in the East is not religion—they have religion enough—but it is bread that these suffering millions of India cry out for with parched throats. They ask us for bread, but we give them stones."*

* The following extracts from New York newspapers are interesting:—

The *New York Critique* says:— "But eloquent as were many of the brief speeches no one expressed so well the spirit of the Parliament of Religions and its limitations, as the Hindu monk. I copy his address in full, but I can only suggest its effect upon the audience, for he is *an orator by Divine right*, and his strong intelligent face in its picturesque setting of yellow and orange was hardly less interesting than these earnest words, and the rich rythmatical utterence he gave them."

(Here follows speech in full.)

Again, says the same paper:—"His culture, his eloquence and his fascinating personality have given us *a new idea of Hindu civilization*. His fine intelligent face and his deep musical voice, prepossessing one

Christian preference for Hinduism

Not many years ago Hinduism, was a topic not of commendation but of condemnation amongst the educated Hindus in Bengal. But times have changed. The Hindus are now exhorted by newspaper editors † and

at once in his favour, he has preached in clubs and churches until his faith has become familiar to us. He speaks without notes, presenting his facts and his conclusions with the greatest art, and the most convincing sincerity and rising often to rich inspiring eloquence."

The *New York Herald* says:—"Vivekánanda is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him, we feel, how foolish it is to send Missionaries to *this learned nation*."

† The following extracts from a leading article in the *Indian Mirror* newspaper, edited by a Neo-Hindu, who is also a Theosophist, may be given as a sample of current newspaper literature on the subject of the Revival of Hinduism :—

"WILL NOT THE HINDUS YET TAKE MORE INTEREST IN THEIR OWN RELIGION?

Now that Mrs. Annie Besant has arrived in India, and attention has been drawn to the proceedings of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, it is time that the Hindu people should concern themselves a little more with their religion than they are accustomed to do. We publish in another column an account of an interview which a correspondent of the *Madras Mail* obtained from Mrs. Besant. Our readers will note that, on being definitely questioned by her interviewer, Mrs. Besant explicitly declared that she was a Hindu in her religious belief. Here is a most remarkable woman, highly accomplished and of great culture, discarding all the religious system of the West, and simply declaring her adherence to the Hindu religion. And yet the Hindus themselves by their indifference, seem to be ignorant what a priceless treasure they possess in their ancient faith. Hinduism took the Parliament of Religions at Chicago by storm, which may seem strange from the fact that the representatives of Hinduism were very few in

platform lecturers to pay greater attention to their own religion; and their exhortation gains point and force from the fact of some cultured foreigners of Christian birth showing a decided preference for Hinduism. Mrs. Annie Besant has recently been lecturing to enthusiastic audiences in various parts of India extolling the excellence of Hinduism. In one of her lectures she deprecated the tendency of modern Hindus towards the cultivation of Natural Science instead of the contempla-

number, while the Buddhist representatives were numerous. Of course, Christianity sent legions of delegates to proclaim its superiority over all other religious beliefs in the Chicago Parliament. Under such conflicting conditions, the representatives of Hinduism seemed to have most impressed the American mind.

* * * * * *

We see, the Americans interesting themselves more and more in the cardinal dogmas of the Hindu religion day by day, we see the most distinguished living English woman openly professing the same creed, and yet the Hindus themselves only languidly look on, as if their religion was a matter of the very slightest importance to them! We say, it is this indifference to the higher ideals of their religion that is mainly responsible for the degradation of the Hindu people.

* * * * *

Surely, if most intelligent and learned foreigners see so much to admire and adopt in the Hindu religion, the Hindus themselves might open their eyes, and betake themselves to Sanskrit study, for without the key of that language, the treasure-chest of Hinduism cannot be well opened. We, therefore, earnestly recommend our Hindu countrymen to reconsider their position, and to take more interest in their own religion, and to employ themselves in Sanskrit studies for the understanding of the truths of Hinduism at first hand.

* * * * *

We do not want them to be Theosophists; that is a matter of their choice. But we decidedly want them to devote themselves to their religion."

tion and study of the spiritual world. She said, she came to India, not to teach her anything, but to wake her up—for she was sleeping the sleep of ages—and rouse her to a consciousness of the infinite wealth of knowledge which lay, so to speak, in her lap.

Decrease of superstition among educated Hindus.

Orthodox Hinduism is gradually losing its hold on educated Hindus. They are, as a rule, not brought up to any particular faith. No religious instruction is imparted in any of the numerous schools and colleges scattered over India except in the shape of Bible-teaching in some of the missionary schools. The same English education which makes them discard native superstitions also makes them discard foreign superstitions. Those who have come to look upon Krishna and Chaitanya as only great men will not be easily persuaded to look upon Christ as anything else. Many—I may say most of them—are in reality monotheists, but monothiests of a different type from those who belong to the Bráhma Samáj. They are, if we may so call them, passive monotheists. They are not idolators themselves, though they do not look upon idolatry with horror; nay, they even countenance it to some extent. Their attitude towards all other forms of faith is one of perfect toleration. But, as they are gradually partaking more and more of the religious catholicity of Hinduism, so also are they gradually imbibing more and more the social catholicity of Christianity. The influence of the Hindu environment is as much perceptible in them as that of the Christian environment.

The A'rya Samáj: Dayánanda Sarasvatí.

A large number of the Neo-Hindus have formed a sect called the A'rya Samáj. Pandit Dayánanda Sarasvatí, the founder this Samáj, was born in Kathiwar in 1824. As his father belonged to the Saiva sect, he was early taught to worship Siva. His mother, fearing for his health, opposed his observing the fasts enjoined on the worshippers of Siva; but as his father insisted on them, frequent quarrels arose between his parents. Meanwhile he studied Sanskrit grammar, learnt the Vedas by heart, and accompanied his father to various temples of Siva. His difficulties began when his father insisted on initiating him in the worship of the Párthiva Linga, a form of Siva. He says in his autobiography:—

"As a preparation for this solemn act I was made to fast; I had thus to follow my father for a night's vigil in the temple of Siva. The vigil is divided into four parts, consisting of three hours each. When I had watched six hours I observed about midnight that the temple servants and some of the devotees, after having left the inner temple, had fallen asleep. Knowing that this would destroy all the good effects of the service, I kept awake myself, when I observed that even my father had fallen asleep. When I was there left alone I began to meditate.

Is it possible, I asked myself, that this idol I see bestriding his bull before me, and who according to all accounts, walks about, eats, sleeps, drinks, holds a trident in his hand, beats the drum, and can pronounce curses on men, can be the great deity, the Mahádeva, the Supreme being? Unable to resist such thoughts any longer I roused my father, asking him to tell me whether this hideous idol was the great god of the scriptures. 'Why do you ask?' said my father. 'Because,' I answered, 'I feel it impossible to reconcile the idea of an omnipotent living God with this idol, which allows the mice to run over his body, and thus suffers himself to be polluted without the slightest pro-

test.' Then my father tried to explain to me that this stone image of the Mahádeva, having been consecrated by the holy Bráhmans, became, in consequence, the god himself, adding that as Siva cannot be perceived personally in this Kali-Yuga, we have the idol in which the Mahádeva is imagined by his votaries.

I was not satisfied in my mind, but feeling faint with hunger and fatigue, I begged to be allowed to go home. Though warned by my father not to break my fast, I could not help eating the food which my mother gave me, and then fell asleep.

When my father returned he tried to impress me with the enormity of the sin I had committed in breaking my fast. But my faith in the idol was gone, and all I could do was to try to conceal my lack of faith, and devote all my time to study."

When Dayánanda was 21 years of age his father wanted him to marry. But as he did not like to do so he ran away from home, and after travelling in various parts of India ultimately became a Sannyásí.

Dayánanda gradually found reason to reject the authority of all the sacred books of the Hindus except the Vedas. He began to preach against idolatry and formulate his new system of monotheism based upon the Vedas. In 1877, he visited Lahore and founded the A'rya Samáj. He also established similar Samájes in several other places in the Punjab. He died at Ajmere on the 30th of October, 1883.

Dayánanda considered the Vedas alone to be inspired. Prof. Max Müller says of him:

"To him not only was everything contained in the Vedas perfect truth, but he went a step further, and by the most incredible interpretations succeeded in persuading himself and others that everything worth knowing, even the most recent inventions of modern science, were

alluded to in the Vedas. Steam-engines, railways and steam-boats, all were shown to have been known, at least in their germs, to the poets of the Vedas, for Veda, he argued, means Divine Knowledge, and how could anything have been hid from that?"*

The following account of the Arya Samáj is taken from the Punjab Census Report for 1891. †

"The members of the A'rya Samáj find the fantastical representations of world and of man which are put forward in the 18 Puránas to be inconsistent with Natural Science, and consequently reject the authority of the Puránas, looking on them as the outcome of ignorance and craft of comparatively recent generations of Bráhmans. The original and only authoritative Scriptures in the eyes of the A'rya Samáj are the four Vedas, and the professed aim of the A'rya Samáj is to restore the paramount authority of the Vedas by purging away the subsequent accretions which have brought about the popular Hinduism of to-day. Scriptures more recent than the Vedas and anterior to the 18 Puranas (such as the Bráhmanas, the six philosophic Darshanas, the ten Upanishads, etc.), are regarded as explanatory of the Vedas and authoritative only where they are not contradictory thereto. The Vedas themselves constitute the only infallible revelation. "The Vedas" writes Dayanand, "are revealed by God. I regard them as self-evident truth, admitting of no doubt and depending on the authority of no other book, being represented in Nature, the Kingdom of God." The bases of the Aryan faith are the revelation of God in the Vedas and the revelation of God in Nature, and the first practical element in this belief is the interpretation of the Vedas in conformity with the proved results of Natural Science.

In the interpretation of the Vedas the Arya Samaj finds itself at issue with the Sanskritists of Europe, whose translations represent the Vedas as the religious literature of a primitive pepole, and, like the literature

* "Biographical Essays", p. 170.

† Reprinted as a pamphlet by the A'rya Samáj.

of other primitive peoples, quite regardless of, and inconsistent with, scientific accuracy. The A'ryas contend that such a view arises from a mistaken literal translation of their scriptures, and that the earlier, and consequently more trustworthy, commentators having always refused to construe the Vedas in their literal sense, it is a mistaken view to suppose that they were originally composed with any meaning other than a metaphorical or derived one. Following these principles, the Samáj not only defends the Vedic Rishis from all imputations of Pantheism and Polytheism, but finds in their writings numerous indications of an accurate acquaintance with the facts of science. It holds that cremation, vegetarianism and abstinence from spirituous liquors are inculcated by the Vedas and inculcated to a large extent on purely scientific grounds. It holds that the great religious rite of the Vedic times the Agnihotra or hom sacrifice, is instituted with a view to rendering air and water wholesome and subservient to health, and because "it plays a prominent part in putting a stop to the prevalence of epidemics and the scarcity of rainfall." It is convinced that the latest discoveries of science such as those of electricity and evolution, were perfectly well-known to the seers who were inspired to write the Vedas.

While conceding this much to modern Natural Science,the A'ryas refuse to see in it anything tending to materialism or atheism. Retaining their confidence in the Vedas, they have avoided the radical materialism of some of the earlier opponents of popular Hinduism. The A'rya philosophy is orthodox, and based mainly on the Upanishads. The tenets of Dayánanda, though leaning rather to the Sánkhya doctrine do not fit in precisely with any one of the six systems; but these systems are all regarded by the A'ryas as true and a different aspect of the same principles. The three entities of Dayánanda's philosophy are God, the Soul, and Prakriti or Matter. Soul he regards as physically distinct from God, but related to Him as the contained to the container, the contemplated to the contemplator, the son to the father. Soul enters into all animals and there are indications of souls in the vegetable kingdom also. In most of its details the Aryan system retains the terminology of the traditional philosophy of Hinduism. It maintains above all things the law of metemsychosis and places the aim of virtue in *moksh* or escape from the law, but this *moksh* or beatitude is for an era (kalp) only, after the termination of which the soul resumes its wanderings. The

localization of the Hindu paradises, Parlok and Swarg, is rejected: heaven and hell lie in the pleasures and sorrows of the soul, whether these be in this life or in the life to come.

As a consequence of this doctrine it holds the futility of rites on behalf of the dead, and by this cuts at the root of that great Hindu institution, the ***shradh***. Like other Hindus the Aryans burn the dead, but for alleged sanitary reasons they employ spices for the burning. At first they took the ***phul*** to the Ganges, but now they cast it into the nearest stream: They do not call in the "Acharaj," and they omit all the ceremonies of the ***Kiryakarm***. At marriage they go round the sacred fire and walk the seven steps like the Hindus, but omit the worship of "Ganesh." They generally employ Bráhmans at weddings but in several known instances these have been dispensed with. The Samáj finds an efficacy in prayer (Prárthana) and worship (upásana); but it greatly limits the number of ceremonies to which it accedes any meritorious power. It discourages entirely the practice of bathing in sacred streams, pilgrimages, the use of beads and Sandal-wood marks, gifts to worthless medicants, and all the thousand rites of popular Hinduism. Only those rites (sanskárs) are to be observed which finds authority in the Vedas and these are 16 in number only. Idolatry and all its attendant ceremonies have, according to the A'ryas no basis in the Vedas and no place in the true religion. Ráma, Krishna and other objects of popular adoration are treated euphemistically as pious or powerful princes of the olden times and in their salutation to each other the Aryas substitute; the word 'Namaste,' for the 'Ram Ram' of the vulgar."

The A'rya Samáj holds weekly meetings at which, in addition to prayers and hymns chanted on the Sáma Veda system, lectures on Vedic and other subjects are delivered. The Samájes are independent of one another; but a large number of them have submitted to the guidance of a Pratinidhi Sabhá or representative Committee. The A'ryas while venerating the memory of Dayánanda Sarasvatí do not look upon him

or any one else as an infallible guru. The Dayánanda Anglo-Vedic College at Lahore was founded by the members of the local A'rya Samáj some time ago. While preparing students for the University Examinations, the College pays special attention to instruction in Sanskrit and Hindi, and imparts a certain amount of religious training. There is generally one Samáj, in each district of the Punjab. There are also many A'rya Samájes in the North-West Provinces and the Bombay Presidency. According to the last Census the A'ryas all over India number 39, 952, of whom 22,053 are in the North-Western Provinces, and 15,539 are in the Punjab.*

Prospect of the A'rya Samáj.

The A'rya Samáj is numerically much stronger than the Bráhma Samáj ; but, we have not got sufficient data to judge whether it is making much progress, even in the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab where it is strongest ; and from the fact of its being weakest in Bombay, Madras, and Bengal where English education has spread most, it does not appear to agree very well with such education. Educated Hindus who reason against the revealed character of the religious literature of other peoples, will in fairness, not make an exception in the case of their own. The followers of the A'rya Samáj have a way of dealing with the Vedic literature, which is not likely to find favour either with the orthodox or the heterodox Hindus. They consider that the Samhitá portion alone of the Vedas is inspired,

* Census of India (1891), Vol. I.

and that their inspiration is self-evident requiring no proof. Dayánanda, the founder of the A'rya Samáj, was asked why he regarded the Samhitá alone as revealed and not the Bráhmanas. The reply was "Samhita is *perse* visible, and proved by perception." Bare, though bold, assertions like these are not likely to carry conviction.



CHAPTER IV.

RECENT HINDU SECTS.

[A. D. 1758-1892]

Recent sects, unimportant, mostly Vaishnava,

The Hindu sects which have sprung up since the establishment of the British rule are not of any great importance. None of them can rank with the Rámánandis, the Kabirpanthis or the Sikhs. With two or three exceptions, which are either of an eclectic or monotheistic character, they are all Vaishnava Saivism has not given rise to a single sect worth noting. The popularity which it lost in the Puránic period, it has never regained since. The great majority of the sects affect the erotic worship of Krishna, which, as we have seen, came into existence towards the close of the Puránic period. Ráma inspired

only two of the sects. The founders of all the sects belonged to non-Bráhmanical castes, * and not a few to the very lowest among these. Ghási Dás the founder of the Satnámi sect of Chhattisgar was a Chámára (currier), Balaráma, the founder of the Balarámi sect, was a Hári whose social position is about the same as that of a Chámára; Rámasarana Pála, the real founder of the Kartábhajá sect was a Sadgopa. With the exception of the Deva Samáj and the Rámkrishna sect, all the other sects have been recruited almost entirely from the lower and ignorant classes. That they have been to a large extent influenced by a desire for social betterment for which orthodox Hinduism holds out no prospect, is evident from the fact that they nearly all abrogate caste if not altogether, at least in their religious houses and at their festivals.

founded by low caste men,

recruited from low castes,

Whether the sects profess Vaishnavism, monotheism or eclecticism, there is one feature common to nearly all of them *—viz. Guru-worship. Amongst Hindus, the Guru or spiritual guide from the remotest antiquity has been held in the highest respect. But the guru of the sects is something more than a spiritual guide, something more even than the Pope of Christendom—he is divinity

characterised by Guru-worship.

* With regard to the Rámkrishna sect, Rámkrishna was a Bráhman. But he did not found any sect; it is a follower of his, a Káyastha, who is organising one.

incarnate. Some of the sectaries place the guru above the Deity; when the God, they say, is in anger, the guru is their protector, but when the guru is in anger there is none to protect. The founders of several sects like the Kabirpanthis and the Satnámis taught the unity of the God-head, and abjured idolatry. But their original monotheistic character has been almost entirely lost sight of, and they have practically exchanged the worship of idols for the worship of gurus. Spiritually, they are worse off for the exchange. The guruship is sometimes elective, but oftener hereditary. In the former case it is probably not liable to much abuse. But hereditary guruship is often productive of the most mischievous results. The founders of even the most unimportant of the sects were pious and capable men; and they had at least some plausible claims to be worshipped by their followers. But it is monstrous that divine homage should be paid to their descendants or heirs as if sanctity is a thing which could be inherited. Yet there are numbers of men, ignorant though they are, who worship men whose only claim to such worship is consanguinity with pious, and in a small way, great men. Not unfrequently the gurus are more anxious about their own worldly welfare, than about the spiritual welfare either of themselves or of their flocks. The tours of the gurus of such large sects as the Satnámis of Chhattisgar are made with the pomp and grandeur of royalty. They

* The Spashtadáyakas among the Bengal Vaishnavas, an insigificant sect, do not recognise the divinity of the Guru.

are of course worshipped not merely with flowers but also with more substantial offerings. They look upon their followers as their subjects, and maintain a staff of officers for the collection of their dues. Their worldliness is not always their only or chief fault. Sometimes, their character is the very reverse of godly.

Charan Dásis.

This sect was founded about the year 1758 by Charan Dás. He preached the worship of Krishna and Rádhá. Like most other Vaishnavas, the Charandásis regard their guru as divine. Men and women of all castes are admitted into the sects and are eligible as gurus. "They affirm, indeed, that originally they differed from other sects of Vaishnavas in worshipping no sensible representations of the deity, and in excluding even the Tulasi plant and Sálagráma stone from their devotions: they have, however, they admit, recently adopted them, in order to maintain a friendly intercourse with the followers of Rámánanda, and their peculiarity in their system is the importance they attach to morality, and they do not acknowledge faith to be independent of works: actions, 'they maintain, invariably meet with retribution or reward: their moral code, which they seem to have borrowed from the Mádhwas, if not from a purer source, consists of ten prohibitions. They are not to lie, not to revile, not to speak harshly, not to discourse idly, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to offer violence to any created being, not

to imagine evil, not to cherish hatred, and not to indulge in conceit or pride."* The Bhágavata Purána and Bhagavatgitá are the recognised Scriptures of the sect. Charan Dás's first disciple was his own sister Sahaji Bái. She has written several works, both independently and in conjunction with her brother.

Delhi is the stronghold of the sect, which counts many wealthy Veniyás among its members.

Kartá Bhajás.

This sect was founded about the beginning of this century by an ascetic named Aulé Chánd.* Tradition has it, that he was picked up in a field by one Mahádeva of the Bárui caste, in the village of Ulá in the district of Nadiyá. Aúle Chánd is said to have then been about eight years old. After living in Mahádev's house for about twelve years, he left it to travel and preach in various parts of Bengal. When he was about twenty-seven years of age he had twenty two disciples all belonging to low castes. Among these disciples was Rámsaran Pál of the Sadgopa caste an inhabitant of Ghoshpárá near Naiháti.

There is a tradition that, while tending his flock, a religious mendicant suddenly appeared before Ram

* Wilson's "Religious Sects of the Hindus" (London, 1861) p. 179.

† Ramsaran Pal is said by Wilson to have been the founder of this sect (*op cit* p. 171). But see Akshaya Kumár Datta's *Upásaka Sampradáya* vol. I (2nd edition). p. 186.

* Professor Wilson (*op. cit.* p. 171) makes Ram Saran a "Gwálá," a mistake to which he was probably led by the similarity of Sadgopa, the caste to which Rámsaran belonged with Gopa (Gwálá) .

Saran and asked for a drink of milk. Just as the holy man had finished his drink, a man came running to say that Rám Saran's wife was on the point of death. The mendicant told Rám Saran to take a jar of water from a tank close by and sprinkle it over his wife. In his haste Rám Saran spilt the water and returned to the mendicant for his advice. The holy man took a handful of mud from the place where the water had fallen, annointed Rám Saran's wife, Satimá, with it, and immediately cured her. The holy man is said to have vanished soon after, and been born again as Rám Saran's son named Rám Dulál. Satimá on her death was buried under a pomegranate tree near Rám Saran's house. A handful of the dust from the foot of this tree is believed by the Kartá Bhajás "to cure any disease and cleanse from any sin. Groups may be seen, prostrate and fasting for days." The tank called *himságar*, the water of which was recommended by Rám Sarans holy visitor for the cure of his wife, is still supposed to possess miraculous healing powers. "The blind, the dumb, and the lame crowd the stairs of the holy tank, and joyfully submit to jostling and blows in order to plunge within its water." *

The chief religious festivals of the Kartábhajás are the Dol and Rásjátrá which are celebrated at Ghoshpárá, the former in March or April, and the latter in October or November. Forty to fifty thousand people

* Hunter's "Statistical account of Bengal" vol. II. (Nadiya and Jessore) Lond. 1875.

are said to assemble at each festival. At these festivals Mahomedans and Hindus of all castes eat together. The annual contributions to the treasury of the Pál family at Ghoshpárá are said to amount to five or six thousand rupees.

To return to Aule chánd. He died in about A. D. 1769 near the village of Chágdah in the district of Nadiyá. He is regarded by his followers as an incarnation of Vishnu like Krishna and Chaitanya. Aule made no distinction of caste or creed amongst his followers. He had Hindu as well as Mahomedan followers. He is said to have performed many miracles among which walking over the Ganges was one of the most notable. His ten commandments were. 1. Do not commit adultery. 2. Steal not. 3. Kill not. 4. Have no adulterous thought. 5. Do not wish for other's property. 6. Do not wish to kill. 7. Do not tell an untruth. 8. Do not use bad language. 9. Talk not meaninglessly. 10. Talk not uselessly.

The Kartá Bhajás disregard caste distinctions, at least in religious celebrations. The initiating mantra "Guru is true" is given after the following conversation between the guru and the neophyte :—†

Guru. Will you be able to follow this religion ?

Neophyti Yes.

Guru. You shall not lie, steal, or commit adultery.

Neophyti. I will not.

Guru. Say "Thou art true, and thine word is true."

† A. K. Datta *op. cit.* p. 191.

Bául.

Like the Spashtadáyaka this is also a recent Vaishnava sect though its date of foundation is unknown. The Báuls do not shave or cut their hair. They are recruited chiefly from among the lower castes, and as a class, are believed to be highly immoral. According to the last census there were, in 1891, six hundred and sixty six male, and seven hundred and seven female Báuls in Bengal.* "Ládugopal, or infant Krishna, is the favourite object of worship; but, in most religious houses the *charan* or wooden pattens of the founder are also worshipped."†

Ny'árá, Sahaji.

The Nyárás and Sahajis ‡ differ but little from the Báuls. Their sexual morality at least in practice is believed to be very low. All these sects are confined to Bengal.

Sakhibhávaka.

About the middle of the present century this curious sect obtained some notoriety in and about Calcutta. The Vaishnavas of this sect express their devotion to Rádhá, the personification of the *Sakti* of Krishna, in a ridiculous and rather disgusting manner. In order to convey the idea of being as it were her followers and friends, a character obviously incompatible with the difference of sex, they assume the female garb, and adopt not only the

* Census of India (1891), Vol. III. p. 149.
† Risley, *op. cit.* p. 347.
‡ A. K. Datta. *op. cit.* p.p. 177-179.

dress and ornaments, but the manners and occupations of women.* The only place where they are met with in any number is Jaypur. There are many Sakhibhávakas who do not marry, as marriage would be inconsistent with their assumed female character.

Darwesh-Faquir.

A sect founded in 1850 by Udaya Chánd Karmakár of Dacca. "When a novice is admitted he receives a *kaupin* or loin cloth, a *khirka* or gown reaching down to the ankles, and a cocoanut shell (*kishti*) in which he is to collect alms ; like the Aghoris and some of the Bául Sects, he is required to taste various disgusting substances, in order to show his superiority to ordinary prejudices. Darwesh-Faquirs never cut their hair or shave, and instead of washing with water, smear themselves and their clothes with mustard oil. Celibacy is professed, but not practised, and every akhárá or community of ascetics has several women attached to it, ostensibly to keep the place in order and cook the food. Nevertheless, they affect great austerity and pretend to be the strictest of the Vaishnava sects. Animal life is never taken, and it is deemed sinful to break off the branches or even the leaves of a tree. Before the tombs of the founders, and on receiving a present, a very elaborate obeisance is made by kneeling, touching the ground with the forehead, and smearing the chest and face with dust."†

A somewhat different account of the Darwesh sect

* Wilson *op. cit* p. 178.

† Risley *op. cit.* Vol. II. p. 347.

is given by Akshaya Kumára Datta.* He ascribes its foundation to Sanátan Goswámi. Possibly, the sect we have noticed above is different and more recent.

Hariboló

The date of foundation of this sect and the name of its founder are unknown. But it is supposed to be a recent one. As its name signifies, singing the name of Hari is its distinctive tenet. Like the Chaitanya Vaishnavas and the Kartá Bhajás, they worship the guru as God. The majority of the Haribolás are householders; only a few are ascetics.

One important change introduced by the Haribolás deserve special mention. The ordinary practice for women in confinenment in this country is to be kept warm. But amongst the Haribolás, the mother and child are bathed. As soon as the child is born and for twenty-one days afterwards, offerings to Hari (called Harirlut) in the shape of sweets are scattered about on the ground to be picked up by the assembled people especially children. There are many Haribolás in Western and Lower Bengal.

Swámi Náráyan.

This sect arose as a protest against the voluptuousness of the Vallabhácháris. Its stronghold is in Gujrát. It was founded by Sahajánanda Svámí, who was born in Oude, in A. D. 1780. In the beginning of the present century, he left his birthplace and settled in Gujrát, where his piety and

* *Op. cit.* (Vol. I. 2nd edition), p. 180.

earnestness soon attracted a large following. He preached the worship of Krishna and Rádhá, and since his death in 1829, he has been worshipped by his followers as an *avatára.**

Paltu Dási.

This sect came into existence about the close of the last, or the beginning of the present century. Paltu Dás after whom the sect is called was a disciple of an ascetic named Gobin Saheb. Paltu's gádi is still in existence in Oude, where a great annual fair is held on the Rám Navamí day in the month of Chaitra. Paltu Das's successor on the gádi receives various presents from his followers on that occasion. The Paltu Dásis salute each other by saying "Satya Ráma" (Ráma is true). They worship Ráma, and are mostly found in Oude and Nepál.

A'pápanthi'.

This sect was nearly synchronous with the last. Its founder was a goldsmith named Munnádás. His *gádi* exists in a place called Mádavá west of Oude. An annual fair is held there in the month of Agraháyana. Like the Paltudásis, the A'pápanthis are initiated in Ráma *mantra.*

Khusi Biswási.

The founder of this sect † was a Mahomedan named Khusi Biswás, an inhabitant of the village of Bhágá near Devagráma in the district of Nadiyá. He was regarded as an incarnation of Chaitanya. No caste is recognised within the sect. Followers of all castes meet and eat together.

* *Bombaichitra,* by Satyendra Náth Tagore, p.p. 412-414.

† It is doubtful if this sect is still in existence.

The Khusi Biswási guru is supposed to cure the sick by charms and amulets.

Balarámi.

The founder of this sect was Balaráma Hári (a very low caste), an inhabitant of the village of Meherpur in the district of Nadiyá. He died about A. D 1850, when he was about sixty-five years of age. Balaráma was a watchman in the employ of the Mullick family at Meherpur. The Mullicks had in their house an idol with gold ornaments which were stolen one night. They chastised Balaráma for his negligence. Balaráma took the punishment to heart and left home with a view to become an ascetic. He was evidently a man of great natural parts,* and gradually succeeded in gathering round him a few disciples who looked upon him as an incarnation of Vishnu.

During the Dol (or Holi) festival, Balaráma used to be worshipped by his disciples. The Balarámis ridicule idolatry, and recognise no distinction of caste. On the death of Balarám, his widow, a woman of examplary character and great intelligence, succeeded to the leadership of the sect. She died about twelve years ago. Since her death, there has been a schism in the

* On one occasion, Balaráma on going to the river to bathe saw some Bráhmans engaged in taking the river-water and offering it to the manes. Balaráma also began to do the same ; on which one Bráhman asked "Balái, what are you doing ?" Balaráma replied, 'I am watering my vegetable garden.' The Bráhman asked, "where is your garden ? Balaráma rejoined, 'where are your ancestors to whom you are offering the water ?' A. K. Datta *op. cit.* Vol. I. p. 219.

sect owing to a dispute about the leadership. The numerical strength of the sect is about one thousand consisting exclusively of ignorant people.*

Satnámi (Northern India).

There are two distinct sects bearing this name one in Northern India, and the other in the Central Provinces. The former was founded towards the close of the last century by an inhabitant of Oude named Jagajibana Dás. His gádi exists at the village of Kotoá where an annual fair is held in autumn. He was the author of several works in the Hindi language. The creed of the Satnámis is a form of pantheism. They address God as "the true name" (Satnáma) ; hence their name. They are met with in Nepal, and in the districts of Benares, Cawnpur, Mathurá, Delhi, Lahore &c. Caste distinctions are observed by the Grihastha members of the sect, but not by the ascetics. The ascetics belonging to this sect, like various other ascetics, are required to taste several disgusting substances.

Satnámi (Central Provinces).

The chámárs form the largest caste in Chhattisgar. They mostly belong to the Satnámi sect. They are a fine, sturdy race of agriculturists, rather tenacious of their rights, and, as they are united, quite capable of holding their own against the Hindus who look down upon them with great contempt. They also sometimes

* For much of the information about this sect, I am indebted to my friend Devendra Nath Mukherji M. A., an inhabitant of Meherpur.

call themselves Rai Dásis after Rai Dás, "a chámar reformer and disciple of Rámánand who lived in the 15th century; the modern Satnámi creed is a revival of the doctrines of Rai Dás preached by Ghási Das in the early part of the present century." Ghási Das, an unlettered but thoughtful chámár, was deeply impressed with the degraded condition of his community, who were strongly addicted to drink and other vicious habits. He gradually acquired considerable influence by his wisdom and high moral character, and gathered round him a handful of devoted followers. One morning he collected them, and telling them to assemble all the chámárs at a particular spot after six months, retired behind the hills in the South Eastern portion of Chhattisgar to meditate and hold communion with God. On the appointed day a large concourse of the Chhattisgari chámárs was brought together to receive God's word from Ghási Dás. The reformer slowly appeared with the rising sun and gave them the message; which was to the effect, that there is only one true God (the Sat Nám), that all men are equal, that the idols of the Hindus are false, and that meat, intoxicating liquors, and smoking are interdicted. The assembled chámárs received the message with great enthusiasm, and the Satnami sect was established. Ghási Dás became their guru and declared the office to be hereditary.

The chámárs gradually found out, that it was hard abstaining from all the good things of the world, and those who wished to indulge in smoking, formed them-

selves into a sub-sect called *Chungiá*.* The *Chungias*, however, appear to have unrestricted social intercourse with the more orthodox members of the community.

The dissemination of the Satnámi doctrines infused new life into the chámárs, and they rose to positions of comparative influence and respectability, which apparently made them an eye-sore to their Hindu neighbours, to whom the very name of chámár is a by-word for all that is degraded. Besides, the protest of the Satnámis against the idolatrous practices of the Hindus aggravated the enmity of the latter. Several attempts were made against the life of Ghási Dás, but none succeeded. But, his son and successor, Bálak Dás was, murdered in 1860. Affrays between the Hindus and the Satnámis now and then occur. Where the latter are in the minority, the former, would not allow the Satnámi guru to ride on an elephant and go in procession through their villages.

The guru goes on tour in great state, with elephants camels and a large following. The Satnámis prostrate themselves before him and give him presents according to their means. He has his deputies called Bhándáris scattered all over the country, who collect his dues; sometimes, villages are farmed out to them at fixed amounts. The Bhándáris represent the guru in all social ceremonies. †

* A Chungi is a leaf (preferably that of a Palás, *Butea frondosa* rolled into the forn of a pipe in which tobacco is smoked : hence the name of the sub-sect.

† It is said that the bride associates with the guru or his representative before entering her husband's home. But the chámárs stoutly deny

The Hindus assert that the Satnámis do not act up to their doctrines. There are, of course orthodox and heterodox people amongst all castes, and some Satnámis certainly do not abstain from meat. The Satnámis salute by bowing low, lifting up their left leg, and exclaiming 'Sat Nám, Sat Nám!' Their worship consists in exclaiming these sacred words at sunrise and sunset. The dead are buried. Relations are fed on the third, fifth, tenth or fifteenth day. The Satnámis do not observe any class distinctions amongst themselves and are a very compact body. They have no social intercourse with Muchis who prepare hides or work in leather. As in other parts, carcases of animals contribute to the food of the latter.

Sáhebdhani.

This sect was founded not long ago by an ascetic called Sáhebdhani who used to live in a jungle adjoining the village of Dogáchhia in the district of Nadiyá. He had great reputation for sanctity and philanthropy. He had as his disciples one Mahomedan and a few Hindus among whom Dukhirám Pál was the most influential. After Sahebdhani's death, Dukhirám succeeded to the guruship of the sect. He was succeeded by his son Charan Pál. At present Charan Pál's son is the guru.

The Sáhebdhanis do not worship idols, nor do they venerate their gurus to the same extent as the Kartá

this, and assert it to be a calumny invented by their Hindu enemies. It is difficult to get at the truth in this matter: the bride appears to be presented before the guru or his deputy, and she has to make a present to this functionary.

Bhajás and the Chaitanya-Vaishnavas do. In their place of worship, they have a wooden seat besmeared with sandal wood paste and strewn over with garlands and flowers. Every Thursday, they (Hindu and Mahomedan alike) meet there and place their offerings consisting of cooked food of various descriptions in front of the seat, and after performing their worship partake of the food. Some of the sectaries offer money, and the fund thus collected is spent in the celebration of an annual festival at Agradvípa on the Bhágirathí.

The Sáhebdhanis admit Hindus as well as Mahomedans into their sect. The initiating *Mantra* to the Hindu is "*Klim*, the Lord of the poor is the Friend of the poor." To the Mahomedan, the *Mantra* is: "He is kind to the poor; He is the Friend of the poor."

The Deva Samáj.

Sivanáráyan Agnihotri, the founder of this Samáj, was born in 1850. He was educated at Rurki College, where he became a teacher of surveying in 1872. He subsequently became a teacher in the Lahore Government College. In 1879, he became a missionary of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj, and soon after gave up his post. Disagreeing with the Bráhmas he started the Deva Samáj on the Jubilee day, in 1887. The Samáj professes monotheism and advocates social reform like the progressive Bráhma Samájes. But it accepts Sivanáráyan as Deva *Guru*. The following extract from the *Conqueror*, the English organ of the Deva

Samáj, showing the nature of Sivanáráyan's claims needs no comment :—

"THE DEV GURU'S ESPECIAL MANIFESTATION, AND HIS POSITION, MISSION, AND WORK."

1. The Law under which the Great Unfolder of universe is working, ensuing thereby the ever-continuous development, progress and refinement of the various spheres of Creation, is called the Law of Evolution.

2. Under the operation of the Law of Evolution, in the course of Time, just as the material and inorganized things have gradually changed towards perfection ; in the same manner, in the "life" manifestation, the Organized Vegetable Kingdom, the Animal Kingdom, and above all Man have all undergone a marvellous change, improvement, refinement and development.

3. As on this Earth the Physical Organism as a whole has attained perfection in the Physical Organism of Man, so has the Spiritual Organism reached perfection in the MANIFESTATION OF DEVAT in the person of DEV GURU.

4. Previous to the Manifestation of Dev Guru, such special persons have, from time to time, appeared as have, according to the requirements of their own age, by their extraordinary mental and moral Powers, *struggled and attained success* to a great extent, in leading humanity to a *better* condition *yet none of them have proclaimed the glad Tidings of creating in Man Ekta* (Union) with the creator and His various kinds of creation ; for, the Nature of *Devat*, required to fulfil the Gospel of EKTA, did not and, in conformiry with the Law of Evolution, could not be manifested in any person before this and which has now in the fullness of time been manifested in the person of DEV GURU.

5. Previous to the manifestation of DEVAT in DEV GURU, no doubt, the various spheres of Creation viz., the Material, the Vegetable, the Animal and Man's kingdoms, as also the Supermundane worlds, and above all the Infinite Creator Himself did exist but none of the humanity possessed that high life and capacity which is necessary for duly realizing and practically establishing those heavenly and most noble blessed and beneficent relations which should bind one with the other. Thus the world was destitute of the proper recognition of EKTA, its

invaluable light and life and the treasures of numerous heavenly blessings arising therefrom, but with the advent of DEV GURU the treasures of heavenly light and life have been unlocked unto Mankind."*

The Samáj conducts three newspapers, of which two are vernacular and one English. Its head-quarters are at Lahore, and there are branches at Rawalpindi, Hoshiarpur, Patna, Rurki, and several other places. The missionaries number 12, and the members and sympathisers about 190.†

Rámkrishna Sect.

This sect, which, as far as we are aware, has not got any name as yet, has come into existence within the last three or four years. It has for its special object the worship of the late Rámkrishna Paramhamsha. He was born in the year 1835. His usual place of residence was Dakshinesvara on the Hooghly close to Calcutta. Here he spent most of his time in meditative devotion in a shady grove by the river side. He died in 1886.

Rámkrishna exercised great influence upon Keshab Chandra Sen and many other men of light and leading in Bengal. Since his death about twenty of his most devoted followers,‡ all educated young men, have become ascetics. They have got a *Matha* at Alambazar near Dakshinesvara. Here a photograph of Rámkrishna and his slippers covered over with flowers are worshipped

* *The Conqueror*, October, 1893.

† *The Census of India*, Vol. XIX. (The Punjab and its Feudatories) p. p. 179-181.

‡ One of these, Swámi Vivekánand, was a delegate at the Chicago Parliament of Religions.

twice a day. Besides these ascetic followers, there are others who are householders. The latter led by Rám Chunder Datta, Lecturer of Chemistry, have instituted the worship of Rámkrishna at Kákurgáchi, a suburb of Calcutta, where his ashes are preserved in a shrine. It should be observed, that during his life-time, Rámkrishna repudiated even the title of *Guru*, and evinced a strong dislike to exceptional honours being paid to him. Rámkrishna's birthday anniversary is annually celebrated by his followers with great *eclát* at Dakshinesvara on Sunday following the day of his birth. At Kákurgáchhi an annual festival is celebrated on the *Janmáshtami* day.

The eclecticism of Hinduism was well exemplified in the life of Rámkrishna. Protáp Chandra Mazumdár thus wrote of him while he was alive: "He worships Shiva, he worships Kálí, he worships Ráma,he worships Krishna and is a confirmed advocate of Vedantist doctrines. He accepts all the doctrines, all the embodiments, usages and devotional practices of every religious cult. Each in turn is infallible to him. He is an idolator, and is yet a faithful and most devoted meditator of the perfections of the one formless, infinite Deity whom he terms *Akhanda Sachchidánanda*. Nor is his reverence confined within Hinduism. For long days he subjected himself to various disciplines to realise the Mahomedan idea of an all-powerful Alla. He let his beard grow, he fed himself on Moslem diet, he continually repeated sentences from the Koran. His reverence for Christ is also deep and genuine. He bows his head at the name of Jesus,

honours the doctrine of his sonship, and we believe he once or twice attended Christian places of worship."

Rámkrishna had no book-knowledge; he may be said to have been almost illiterate. But, observes Protáp Chandra Mazumdár.

"If all his utterances could be recorded, they would form a volume of strange and wonderful wisdom. If all his observations on men and things, could be reproduced, people might think that the days of prophecy, of primeval unlearned wisdom have returned. But it is most difficult to render his sayings into English. We here try to give some stray bits :—

1. So long as the bee is outside the petals of the lily, it buzzes and emits sounds. But when it is inside the flower, the sweetness hath silenced the bee. It drinks the nectar, and forgets sounds, and forgets itself. So the man of devotion.

2. Put your *ghara* (earthern pot) inside the brook of clear water. There is bubbling, there is noise, as long as the vessel is empty. When it is full, the bubbling ceases, the disturbance ceases. In the silence and fulness the vessel lies in the depth of the element. So the heart in devotion.

3. Boil your sugar well in a living and active fire. As long as there is earth and impurity in it the sweet infusion will smoke and simmer. But when all impurity is cast out, there is neither smoke nor sound but the delicious crystalline fluid heaves itself in its unmixed worth, and whether liquid or solid, is the delight of men and gods. Such is the character of the men of faith.

4. Through the stream of the troublous world I float a frail half-sunk log of wood. If men come to hold by me to save their lives, the result will be this: they will drown me without being able to save themselves. Beware of *gurus*.

5. Unshod, and with bare feet who venture to walk upon thorns and sharp stones? Shod with faith in Hari, what thorn or sharp stone can harm you?

6. Hold the post well driven into the ground with your hand, and then you can quickly revolve round and round without falling. Have faith in a fixed and strong principle, and then though your movements

may be many and rapid, no harm will ever befall you. Without principle every movement is a step towards fall."

Kudápanthi

This sect was founded at Hattras (District Agra), about the middle of the present century by a blind Veniyá of the name of Tulasi Dás.

The Kudápanthis do not recognise caste distinctions. Anybody can become a guru. There are gurus at Hattras, Lucknow, Agra and several other places in the North-Western Provinces.

The Kudápanthis do not worship idols. They meet together in the evening, irrespective of caste and sex, when they have music; and passages are read from the works of their founder as well as of Nának, Kabir, Raidás and other reformers. The meeting ends with a feast in a hut (*kudá*): hence the name of the sect.

Like the Bengal Vaishnavas, they look upon the guru as divine.

Kukás.

The Kukás * (or "shouters") are so called, because during their religious exercises they fall into a state of frenzy and pray in a loud voice. The sect was founded about 1846, by Bólak Sing, a Sikh money-lender of Hasro (Rawalpindi District). His main object was to break the power which the Bráhman had acquired over his coreligionists, and to reintroduce the circumambulation of the Granth

* The Census of India, Vol. XIX. The Punjab and its Feudatories (p.p. 168-171).

instead of the sacred fire. After his death, one of his disciples named Rám Singh (son of a carpenter) began to preach his doctrines vigorously. Rám Sing claimed to be an incarnation of Guru Gobind Sing, and taught his followers to believe in the speedy overthrow of the British rule. In 1872, there was a mutiny of the Kukás in consequence of which Rám Sing was deported. He died at Rangoon in 1888. He has been succeeded by his brother Budh Sing.

Mr. E. D. Maclagan, Superintendent of the Census operations in the Punjab, returns the number of the Kukás at 11, 146. The Kukás are supposed to avoid meat and spirits of all kinds; and they allow intermarriage.

CHAPTER V.

THE BRÁHMA SAMÁJ.

Monotheistic sects, in pre-British period;

Since the Buddhist-Hindu period there have risen from time to time many monotheistic sects amongst the Hindus. They have, however, like the Kabirpanthis and the Chhattisgarh Satnámis, mostly degenerated into guru worshippers. They still discountenance idolatry, they still disregard caste-distinctions, at least to a great extent; when questioned they would profess belief in one invisible Deity; practically, however, the guru is their sole Deity, at least for the great majority of them.

in British period.

Of the indigenous monotheistic sects which have come into existence since the establishment of the English rule, but which do not own English influence in any way, there is only one, the Rámsanehi sect, which so far as we are aware, has preserved the purity of its monotheistic faith.

Ramsanehi. * Rámcharan the founder of this sect was born in A. D. 1719 at the village of Surasena in Jayapur. He strongly opposed idolatry. The Bráhmans of his village persecuting him on that account he left home and after travelling in various parts of Hindusthán settled in the state of Udayapur. The king of this state being incited by Bráhmans began to persecute Rámcharan. He, in consequence, took shelter with the Rájá of Sháhpur, who had sent him an invitation. The Ramsanehi sect was founded by him two years afterwards. Rámcharan died in 1798.

As is the case with most other sects, there are lay as well as monastic members. The latter must lead a life of celibacy and strict asceticism, and devote themselves to study and the cultivation of such virtues as charity, mercy, &c. They are strictly enjoined not to take money presents. They must not sing, dance, smoke, or take intoxicating liquors. They are strict vegetarians, and carry their scrupulosity about destroying animal life to the same extreme as the Jains.

Rámcharan had twelve chief disciples, a number which is kept up to the present day. They are each assigned a duty in the economic and educational arrangements of the religious house of the sect: one of them is in charge of the stores, another looks after the clothes and blankets which are presented by the

* For information regarding the Ramsanehi sect I am indebted to Akshayakumár Datta's "Upásaka Sampradáya."

laity, a third watches the conduct of the other members of the order, a fourth specially chosen for his sanctity imparts religious instruction to women, and so on.

If any member of the order be charged with a serious offence he is brought to Sháhpur, and tried by a Panchayet composed of eight out of the twelve head disciples. If found guilty, the lock of hair left on his head is cut off, and he is excommunicated.

To become a monk one has to change his name and shave his head with the exception of a slender lock. The head of the monks who has got his *gadi* at Shahpur is called a *Mohanta.* According to the number of the lay members in a village or town two or more of the monks look after their spiritual welfare. Lest the monks should form local connections detrimental to the impartial discharge of their duties, they are not allowed to stay at one place for more than two years.

All castes are admitted into the sect. The Rámsanehis are strongly opposed to idolatry. Their creed leans towards Pantheism. They worship the Deity under the name of Ráma. Their place of worship is called Rámadvára. Besides Sháhpur, there are Rámadváras at Jayapur, Jodhpur, Nágod, Udayapur, Chitor and various other places. The service is conducted thrice a day. The morning service is the most important being joined in by the entire congregation. It concludes with hymns sung by women. The evening service lasts for an hour and is attended only by men.

The Rámsanehis celebrate an annual festival in the

month of Fálgun which they call *Phuldól*, though it has no connection whatever with the Hindu festival of that name. They are found in large numbers in Western and Northern India.

Another monotheistic sect * which was founded in Bengal about the same time as the Bráhma Samáj, but by an illiterate man of low-caste origin also deserves mention.

Rámballavi.

Rámballava the reputed founder of this sect was a disciple of Aule Chánd. But the real founder is said to have been one Krishnakinkara Dás who lived at Bánsberiá, in the district of Hooghly, about the middle of the present century. Though illiterate he was a man of great parts.

The Rámballavis venerated the scriptures of Hinduism, Mahomedanism, and Christianity. They had an annual festival on the Siva Chaturdasi in honour of their founder. During that festival passages from the Koran, the Bible, and the Bhagavatgítá were read in front of a Vedi (dais) dedicated to the Great Truth. Persons of all castes and creeds had their meals together; and it is said that even beef was eaten during the festival.

The Rámballavis had a very high standard of morality, regarded all men as equal and cultivated love and humility in their conduct towards one another. One of their hymns begins thus: "Kálí and Krishna (Hindu)

* The sect is now believed to be extinct.

God (English), Khodá (Mahomedan), there is no objection to any name; be not influenced by the dissensions among their followers."

The following may be given as an example of the prayer of the Rámballavis:

"O Lord! The prayer of thy servant is, that he may have strength to act according to thy will: thy will be done." *

Absence of Guru-worship in the Bráhma Samaj

The Bráhmas do not countenance guru-worship. Keshab Chandra Sen at one time was very near being made a guru; but he soon after openly disavowed all claims to be one. A Bráhma missionary of lesser note in the Punjab has recently been installed as guru by a small sect called the Deva Samáj. But he has ceased to be a Bráhma. The Sádháran Bráhma Samáj, which comprises the most influential body of Bráhmas at the present day, has taken special care to guard against, what taking the liberty of coining a word, may be called gurucracy.

The Bráhma Samáj more a social than a religious secession from Hinduism.

The Bráhma Samáj is more a social than a religious secession. † The points of contact between Bráhmaism and Hinduism are the monotheistic sections of the Neo-Hindus, such as the members of

* For part of the information regarding the sect, I am indebted to my esteemed friend Nagendra Nath Chatterji, a missionary of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj.

† There are many Bráhmas who perceive and admit their accordance with Hinduism in religious belief, as will be evidenced by the following among many extracts that could be made from their writings:

the A'rya and Prárthaná Samájes of Northern and Western India who are cautious and moderate in their social reforms. Among the Bráhmas progressiveness is measured by the thoroughness of social reform. Keshab Chandra Sen and his party seceded from the A'di Bráhma Samáj, because the latter were not prepared to go as far in the direction of social reform as the former. The Sádháran Bráhma Samáj separated from Keshab's Progressive Bráhma Samáj, because the latter was not progressive enough, because Keshab did and his adherents countenanced an act of social transgression, the marriage of his daughter in un-Bráhma form.

The A'di Bráhma Samáj has of late been well nigh re-absorbed into Hinduism, because it did not insist upon social reformation. The great majority of its members

"Brahmoism" says P. Runganadan Mudeliyar of the Southern India Bráhma Samáj, "is both a universal religion and a form of Hinduism. The veneration towards Brahma, the one Supreme Being, the central object of adoration in Hinduism, makes a man a Hindu in religious belief. Every Hindu addresses his favourite God as Brahma; His name is everywhere to be met with in the Srutis, the Smritis, the Darsanas, Puránas, and Tantras, in fact in all the Hindu Shastras: it is chanted forth in the hymns and formulas repeated at every Hindu ceremony.

The Bráhmo idea of Brahma being substantially the same as those of the Hindu in general, especially as those of the writers of the Upanishads, which every Hindu regards with veneration,—and since the Brahmos have a religious manual consisting of selections from the shastras only, and a form of religious service containing texts from the Vedas, also a ritual containing as much of the ancient form as could be preserved compatibly with the dictates of conscience,—and moreover, Bráhmoism being the legitimate result of the higher teachings of the Vedas, it is evident that while calling ourselves Theists, we can conscientiously call ourselves also Hindus in religious belief." Miss Collet, "Brahmo year Book" for 1882, p. 56.

are to all intents and purposes NeoHindus. The following reply to a charge made against the Samáj that it was averse to social reformation was authoritatively given in 1870: "It [The A'di Bráhma Samáj] leaves matters of social reformation to the judgments and tastes of its individual members. It reckons those who have taken a part in social reformation as well as those who have not to be all Brahmas if they profess themselves to be so. It only lays greater stress upon renunciation of idolatry and purity of conduct than upon social reformaation. To the wisdom of this principle, those who bring the above charge against the Samaj cannot but accede.

The next charge brought against the Samaj is, that it upholds the system of caste...The Samaj is not so illiberal as to maintain that, when a Brahma does not get matches for his offspring among men of his own caste he should keep them in a state of perpetual celibacy or that, by relapsing into idolatry, he should marry them with idolatrous rites to orthodox matches of his own caste. Bráhmaism is the dearest of all things and when caste comes into collision with religion, the former must give way to the latter. When there is no such collision, a man cannot certainly be blamed for not widening the breach between himself and his couutrymen for the sake of a mere social distinction." *

* "The Adi Brahma Samaj, its views and principles." p.p. 5-6. Haris Chander Mukherjî was one of the founders of the Bhowanipore Bráhma Samáj, yet he did not consider it inconsistent to celebrate the Durgá Pujá in his house. ["Life of Harish Chandra Mukherji" (Bengali), by Ram Gopal Sanyal. Calcutta, 1887 p. 53.]

According to the Census of 1891 the Bráhmas number altogether 3,051, of whom no less than 2,056 belong to Bengal. * This number, though very small, much smaller than that of the A'rya section of the Neo-Hindus is significant considering that the Bráhma Samáj has hitherto been chiefly recruited from the more advanced sections of the educated community. Quite recently, however, Bráhmaism has been showing signs of decline. The A'di Bráhma sect which was founded by Rájá Rám Mohan Roy and revived by Devendra Nath Tagore has now well nigh merged into Neo-Hinduism. The Progressive Bráhma sect started by Keshab Chandra Sen has now dwindled into a small body torn by internal dissentions. Several of the most zealous missionaries of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj, the strongest body of Bráhmas at the present day, have recently gone back towards Neo-Hinduism. The *Indian Messenger*, the organ of the Samáj, makes the following very candid confession :

Signs of decline in the Bráhma Samáj.

"There is no denying the fact that the condition of the Brahmo Somaj is very low at present. Both externally and internally it is weak, and its weakness is so great that nothing short of a strong faith in the power and greatness of truth and in the uplifting hand of God, can uphold a man in the arduous struggle for reform. * * Of the educated men

* "Census of India" (1891), Vol. X. In 1881 the number of Bráhmas in Bengal was 788. "The advance" observes the Census Commissioner "is believed to be due rather to more accurate enumeration than to any real progress." ("Census of India" 1891) Vol. III.

amongst whom the preaching of Brahmoism has been up to this time confined, the majority are either indifferent or positively opposed to our principles and practices. Secondly, the influence that the Brahmos once exercised over the literature of the country is gradually diminishing, and they are no longer looked upon as leaders in literature. Thirdly, the position they once occupied in every form of good work in the country, also is being slowly surrendered. Formerly it was noticed even in official reports that almost every form of good work, such as the founding of girls schools, or the starting of philanthropic or charitable societies had, in many instances, Brahmo workers at its bottom. But that co-operation of the members of the Samaj is no longer sought, and others have come forward to carry on such works without their help. Fourthly the influence on the morality of the people that the little body of the Brahmos once exerted, has also visibly declined. There was a time when the moulding of the moral and spiritual aspirations of the rising generation of educated young men was entirely in the hands of the Bráhmo Samáj, but their eyes have been diverted from Bráhmoism by a so-called revival of a form of neo-Hinduism. *

The *Interpreter*, the organ of a section of the New Dispensation church, thus writes :—

"It is a notorious fact that many of our fellow religionists have begun to show a strange fancy for Sanyasis, Fakirs, Sadhus and religious mountebanks of all sorts. This is largely owing to the defection of a well known Brahmo missionary, one of the earliest and best followers of Keshub Chunder Sen in times gone by. This gentleman, the lineal descendent of a Vaishnava saint, took the old Hindu devotee ways after he got estranged from his leader, and found no satisfaction elsewhere. His example led away a good many at first, and since then a regular epidemic has grown in the direction of superstitious reverence for the theatricalities of Hindu devoteeism. The disease is most prevalent in the Sadharan Samaj, but is slowly infecting every other section of the community. We think it is high time to draw notice to the evil, and if possible to provide against it.

* The *Indian Messenger*, Oct 17, 1886.

It must not be understood that we think our misguided Brahmo friends to be dishonest men. On the contrary we think their very honesty is the cause of their aberration. They honestly seek the satisfaction of their religious instincts and if the ministrations and teachings of the Bráhmo Somaj fail to give them that satisfaction they naturally look elsewhere, and wherever they find it, or the semblance of it, or even the profession of it, there they go. One peculiar symptom of the outbreak is that those who suffer from it almost always retain their intellectual, and partly their social adherence to the Bráhmo Somaj, they seldom say they have ceased to be Bráhmos, but their hearts, their spiritual affiliation, are with strange practices, with secret sects. * * Now opinions, constitutions, and social reforms are important in their way, but very much more important to a religious body are its spritual concerns such as faith, love, wisdom, insight, devotion, depth, holiness, and the magnetic personality of leaders. It is precisely in these latter articles the Brahmo Somaj lacks. And mere speeches and professions do not supply that lack. Our ceaseless controversies, endless personal dislikes, worldly-minded activities stand in the way of spiritual attraction, and disgust our brethren. What matters it if one party wins when our best and most ardent men are alienated? The danger is growing every day." *

Though the writers here have probably written rather strongly in order to stimulate their co religionists to greater exertions, there is no denying the fact, that Neo-Hinduism has for sometime past been successfully competing with Bráhmaism, which has lost the favour it once enjoyed with the educated classes. If the signs of the time are to be depended upon, the prospect of Bráhmaism as a distinct religion in educated India does not appear to be much brighter than that of Christianity.

* The *Interpreter*, April, 1894.

Early life of Rám Mohan Roy.

Rám Mohan Roy, the founder of the Bráhma Samáj was born at Rádhánagar in the district of Hooghly (Bengal) in the year 1774 A.D. His father was a petty Zamindar who had served under the Nawabs of Murshidábád. In his ninth year he was sent to Pátná to study Persian and Arabic. After he had acquired sufficient mastery over these languages, he went in his twelfth year to Benares to study Sanskrit. There he stayed for 4 years and imbibed the pantheistic ideas of the *Upanishads* which he studied deeply. Returning home he published a treatise against the idolatry of his coreligionists which caused a rupture between him and his father. He left home and wandered in various parts of India and Thibet. After 4 years of exile, he was recalled home by his father, where he stayed till his twentyfifth year learning English, studying the Hindu *Sástras* and carrying on religious controversies.

Rám Mohan in Government service;

In 1800 he entered Government service and held various posts with distinction till he was made *Dewan* or head officer of the District Collector. While in this capacity at Rangpur he wrote various Persian tracts and translated parts of the Vedánta.

in Calcutta.

In 1814, Rám Mohan Roy retired from Government service and settled in Calcutta devoting himself to religious culture and the investigation of truth. The same year he founded the A'tmiya Sabhá "for the worship of the one Invisible God as inculcated in the *Upanishads*" He entered into

vigorous contests not only with the Hindus, but, also with the Christian missionaries, and published his "Precepts of Jesus" which was followed by the three "Appeals to the Christian Public." He actively cooperated with the Unitarians of Calcutta and attended their Church. William Adam, a Baptist Missionary, was converted by him to the Unitarian faith.

The Bráhma Samáj.

Rám Mohan Roy gradually gathered a respectable following of Theists round him, and in 1828, rooms were hired in Chitpore Road, where he held prayer meetings every Saturday evening. The service consisted of recitation of Vedic texts, delivering of a sermon, and singing of hymns. The influential support which Rám Mohan now received enabled him, in January, 1830 to found the Bráhma Samáj. A large house, in Chitpore Road was purchased and the Samáj was endowed with a maintenance fund. The Trust Deed of the Samáj* clearly sets forth, that the Samaj was to be a "place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people without distinction as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner for the worship and adoration of the Eternal Unsearchable and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe but not under or by any other designation or title peculiarly used for and applied

* It is dated the 8th of January, 1830 and is signed by Dwaraka Nath Tagore, Cally Nath Roy, Prosonno Coomar Tagore, Ram Chandra Vidyavagish, Ram Mohan Roy, Boikunta Nath Roy, Radha Prasad Roy, aud Rama Nath Tagore,

to any particular Being or Beings by any man or set of men whatsoever." "No graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of anything" was to be admitted within the Samáj premises. The Trust Deed states, "that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer, or hymn be delivered, made, or used" in the worship at the Samáj "but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue and the strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds." *

Rám Mohan as social reformer;

Rám Mohan Roy was not only a religious but also a social reformer. He wrote several treatises against the concremation of Hindu widows; and it was chiefly through his exertions that that horrible practice was abolished in December, 1829. "He also fought against the evils of kulinism and polygamy, and is said to have presented a petition to the Government for prohibiting polygamy by legislation."

as educationalist.

Rám Mohan's exertions were not confined to religious and social reforms. He took an active part in the educational movements of his time. He was greatly in favour of English education and wrote an able letter to Lord Amherst

* "The English works of Rájá Rám Mohan Roy," Calcutta, 1885, Vol I. pp. 492,493.

advocating it. He cordially helped Dr. Duff in starting a missionary school. He was also one of the principal promoters of the Hindu College. He wrote books on geography and grammar in Bengali, and for sometime conducted a Bengali newspaper called *Sambád Kaumadi*.

Last years.

In November, 1830, Rám Mohan left for England. The chief objects which he had in view were to represent the grievances of the Emperor of Delhi who had appointed him his ambassador and conferred on him the title of Rájá, to give evidence before the select committee of the House of Commons upon the working of the Judicial and Revenue systems in India, and to present memorials to Parliament advocating the abolition of Sati. He was well received in England, and France. He submitted a written evidence of great value before the Commons Committee and had the satisfaction of seeing the appeal against the abolition of Sati preferred by orthodox Hindus rejected by Parliament. The climate of Europe however severely tried him, and he breathed his last at Bristol on the 27th September, 1833.*

* His remains, at first interred in a shrubbery, were removed ten years afterwards to a cemetery near Bristol, where Dwáraká Nath Tagore raised a tomb over his grave with the following inscription :

"Beneath this spot
Rest the remains of Rája Rámmohan Roy Bahadoor.
A conscientious and steadfast believer in the unity of the Godhead,
He consecrated his life with entire devotion
To the worship of the divine spirit alone.

Neophyti. "Thou art true and thine word is true."

When the disciple has made sufficient progress, he is taught the most important, or, as it is called the *Sixteen anna mantra* of the sect: 'O Great Lord Aule, my happiness is in thee alone, not a moment am I without thee, I am even with thee, save O Great Lord."

Another version of the *mantra* differs chiefly from the last in adding: "The guru is true, evil is false," *i.e.* all evils like disease can be got rid of by the grace of the guru.

After the death of Aule chánd, his soul was supposed to have passed into the body of his disciple, Rámsaran Pál who lived towards the close of the last century. He was succeeded on the *gadi* by his wife. The present occupant of the *gadi* is Isvarachandra Pál. He is the head guru and is called *Thákur* (god); and though he comes of a low caste even Bráhmans and Káyasthas are said to fall down at his feet, and eat the remnants of his food.

The secondary gurus, or as they are called Mahá-shayas are subordinate to the Thákur of Ghoshpárá to whom they have to give a share of what they get from their disciples. There are a few Mahomedan Mahásayas, whose Hindu disciples partake of the leavings of their food. Disputes sometimes occur about the jurisdiction of the Mahásayas which are referred for settlement to the Thákur.

Spashtadáyaka

This sect is confined to Bengal and is said to have been founded by Ruprám Kabiráj, a disciple of Krishna Chandra Chakravarti of Saidábád. The date of its foundation is unknown. The Vaishnavas belonging to it do not recognise the divinity of the guru. Male and female members of the sect live together in the same *Matha* or monastery professedly as brothers and sisters. They sing and dance together, overpowered by love for Chaitanya and Krishna. The female Spashtadáyakas shave their heads keeping only a slender tress. They are said to have had unrestricted access into *zenanas* in Calcutta sometime ago, to the inmates of which they used to impart religious instruction. At the time of H. H. Wilson the doctrine of the Spashtadáyakas were being largely diffused in Calcutta.* But their influence has declined of late.

Admission into the sect is made without distinction of caste. The sect marks are "a shorter *tilaka* than that used by the other Vaishnavas, and a single string of *Tulasi* beads worn close round the neck.

"The dead are buried in a sitting posture, with a cloth (*námábali*) stamped with the name Hari wrapped round the head; the arms are folded across the chest, a necklace is hung round the neck, and a cocoanut shell (*karamka*), wallet, and a staff (*danda*) are placed by the side."†

* H. Wilson, "Religious Sects of the Hindus" (1861), p. 170.

† Risley's "Tribes and castes of Bengal" Vol. II. p. 346.

Debendranath, with twenty of his adherents, was the first to sign the "Covenant."

Under the leadership of Devendranath Tagore, the Samáj made rapid strides towards progress. A monthly periodical called the *Tattwabodhini Patriká* was started under the editorship of Akshaya Kumár Datta, one of the best Bengali writers of the time. The number of members of the Samáj rose from 83 in 1843 to 573 in 1847.

The Vedas and Upanishads not authoritative in the Bráhma Samáj.

Though Hinduism is professedly based upon the Vedas, they are but little known to the great majority of the Hindus. In 1845, four young Bráhmans were sent by Devendranath Tagore to Benares to study the Vedas. On their return to Calcutta two years later with copies of the work, a discussion ensued as to whether it was to be regarded by the Bráhma Samáj as authoritative. The decision of the majority was that neither the Vedas nor the Upanishads were to be considered in the same light as the Koran is by the Mahomedans and the Bible by the Christians; but such texts and precepts only were to be accepted as harmonised with the monotheism professed by the Samáj.

Its prosperity.

The Bráhma Samáj was now in the height of its prosperity which was largely due to the high social position and religious fervour of Maharshi Devendranath. His periodical residence on the Himálaya inspired him with grand sentiments, "Devendra's prayers" says Protáp Chandra Mazumdar, "were the overflow of great emotional impulses stirred by intense meditation on the beauties

and glories of nature. His utterances were grand, fervid, archaic, profound, as the feelings were which gave them rise" *

Keshab Chandra Sen's early life.

In 1857, Keshab Chandra Sen became a member of the Bráhma Samáj by signing the covenant. He was then nineteen years of age, and was still a student at the Hindu College. He had already given evidence of his energy and talents by promoting various organisations of which the Kalutolá Evening School founded in 1855 and the Good Will Fraternity in 1857, were the principal. The former was attended by young men from the neighbourhood of Kalutolá where Keshab Chandra's home was. He was the Rector of the School, and several of his friends and associates were teachers. The Good Will Fraternity was a religious institution, of which the object was partly theological and partly devotional. †

The Bráhma school, 1859.

The Bráhma school was founded in 1859, where weekly classes were held on Sundays. Keshab used to lecture there in English on the philosophy of Theism, and Devendra Nath in Bengali on the doctrines and theology of the Bráhma Samáj. The school at first met at the premises of the Kalutolá evening school mentioned above, a damp, dingy one-storied house. But it was

* "Life of Keshub Chunder Sen." Calcutta, 1891. p. 91.

† On one occasion the Fraternity was visited by Devendra Nath Tagore. Protáp Chandra Mazumdar, himself a prominent member, thus records his impression: "He was tall, princely, in the full glory of his health and manhood, he came attended by liveried servants, and sur-

soon removed to more spacious and comfortable quarters in Chitpore Road. The School held annual examinations and granted diplomas of merit.. It lasted for 5 years, and gave a good training to the Bráhma youth of whom several in after-life became missionaries.

Commencement of missionary work.

The same year saw Keshab Chandra a clerk at the bank of Bengal on a pay of Rs. 25. He did his work so well there, that within a year he was promoted and his pay doubled. Shortly afterwards, however he made up his mind to leave all secular occupations and devote himself exclusively to missionary work. Friends and guardians remonstrated; the Bank authorities held out bright prospects. But Keshab Chandra kept to his resolution; and in July, 1861, he resigned his post. He had already established his reputation by his tracts and lectures. In the summer of 1860, he had been to Krishnanagar on his first missionary expedition. Krishnanagar is an ancient town with a Bráhma Samáj the oldest in India, outside Calcutta, and a college which, thirty years ago, was one of the most flourishing in Bengal. Keshab's lectures drew large and appreciative audiences. Mr. Dyson, a Christian missionary at Krishnanagar, thought it necessary to deliver counter lectures. "Nothing" says P. C. Mazumdár "roused

rounded by massive stalwart Brahmos, who wore long gold chains, and impenetrable countenances. We who were very young men and not initiated in the Brahmo Somaj secrets at all, were highly elated and encouraged by such company, and it was inducement to us to follow with zeal our religious career." "Life of Keshub Chunder Sen," p. 60.

Keshub's nature so much as opposition, and Mr. Dyson instead of being able to crush the rising influence of the young man, fanned the flame of his fierce energy. Keshub spoke till his lungs were about to burst, and medical men ordered him to stop. All Krishnagar sided with the Bráhmo reformer."* The theological controversy begun at Krishnanagar was carried to Calcutta, and created considerable sensation at the time.

Keshab as Minister of the Samáj

On the 13th April, 1862, Keshab Chandra was installed by Devendra Nath Tagore as *A'chárya* or minister of the Bráhma Samáj. The installation took place with great *eclat* and Keshab received the title of Brahmánanda, and was presented with a rich casket containing an ivory seal. The festivities and banquets accompanying the occasion were on a princely scale. Keshab and some of his friends desired that their ladies should participate in these festivities. But his relations, would not brook the idea of his wife going to the house of Devendra Nath Tagore, an excommunicated Hindu. He was, however, firm and resolute; and notwithstanding opposition of a very serious nature, took his wife to Devendranath's house on the installation-day. But that very evening, he got a letter signed by his uncle and elder brother, telling him that he must consider himself and his wife as excommunicated, and that they would not be allowed to re-enter his ancestral house. Devendranath received the couple most hospitably and treated them

* *Op. cit.* p. 72. For Keshab Chandra Sen's Life, I am chiefly indebted to Protáp Chandra Mazumdár's excellent biography.

with great consideration. By the end of the year, 1862, however, the dispute with his relations having been amicably settled, Keshab re-entered the family house.

Missionary tour in Bombay and Madras.

In February, 1864, Keshab started on a Missionary tour through Bombay and Madras. At both these places he was warmly welcomed and eagerly listened to. The Madrasis called him the "Thunderbolt of Bengal," so deeply impressed were they by his eloquence and enthusiasm.

In 1866, Keshab seceded from the Calcutta Bráhma Samáj, thenceforth called the *A'di* (or original) Bráhma Samáj. The circumstances under which this happened are thus related by his biographer :—

"In the cyclone of Oct. 1865, the old building of the Adi Samaj at Jorasanko was so far damaged, that the weekly Divine Service had to be removed thence to the dwelling house of Devendranath Tagore. While there, one Wednesday in November, it was so arranged that before the newly created upacharyas (assistant ministers, who had renounced their Brahminical thread) arrived, the two former upacharyas, who had been deposed *for retaining their sacred thread* by the authority of Devendranath himself were installed into the pulpit again. In order that this might be done without hindrance, the devotional proceedings were begun a few minutes earlier than the appointed time. When on arrival at the place of worship, Keshub and his friends witnessed this irregularity, they left the service, and warmly protested. Devendra Nath replied, that as the service was being held in his private house, he had the right to make what arrangement he liked. But Keshub's party insisted, that it was the public worship of the Brahma Samaj only transferred for a little interval to his house by the consent of the congregation, and if he chose to violate the rules of the ministry laid down under his own presidency, they must decline to join such service in future. Thus began the act of secession from the parent

Samaj at Jorasanko.........He [Keshub] proposed a separate day of public worship in the Samaj building, apart from the usual Wednesday service for himself and his friends. He repeatedly endeavoured to arrange united festivals during the anniversary. But to no purpose, Devendra had finally made up his mind and was inexorable. He feared that any continuance of relations with these young firebrands would lead to endless troubles in future. The secession alone could solve the difficulty," "Life of Keshub Chunder Sen," p. 94.

Since the secession the Adi Bráhma Samáj has been on the decline.

Foundation of the Bráhma Samáj of India.

Keshab commenced an independent career in 1866. He had the sympathy and co-operation of the great majority of the younger portion of the Bráhma community. At a meeting held on the 11th of November, 1866, the Bráhma Samáj of India, or, as it was afterwards called, the Church of the New Dispensation was founded.* Keshab secured the *Indian Mirror* newspaper, which he had started in 1861 in conjunction with Manomohan Ghose as the English organ of the Bráhma Samáj. He also started a vernacular journal called the *Dharma Tattva*.

The members of the new Samáj wanted to make

* The resolution adopted by the Meeting was; "Whereas the trustees of the Calcutta Bráhma Samáj have taken over to themselves the charge of the whole property of the said Samáj, and the connections of the public with the said property have ceased, and whereas the money subscribed by the public should be spent with the consent of the public, it is resolved at this meeting that the subscribers or Members of the Bráhma Samáj be formally organised into a Society, and that subscriptions be spent in accordance to their wishes for the propagation of Bráhmaism."

Keshab its head. But he declined. He caused a resolution to be passed, "that the Bráhma Samáj of India had no human head, God alone was its head." He undertook to be Secretary. The membership of the Samáj was open to all. "Selections from all the scriptures of all nations of the world were compiled to form its text book of devotional lessons, and for the first time extracts from the Bible, Koran, Zendavesta, and the Hindu Sástras stood side by side as the scriptures of the Bráhma Samáj." The motto of the Samáj composed in Sanscrit by Pandit Gour Govinda Ray was :— "The wide universe is the temple of God. Wisdom is the pure land of pilgrimage. Truth is the everlasting scripture. Faith is the root of all religion. Love is the true spiritual culture. The destruction of selfishness is the true asceticism. So declare the Bráhmas." Eight of the most devoted of Keshab's followers were formed into a body of missionaries. They took the vow of poverty. "Every one resigned his place and prospects of life, offered his life-long services to the Church, and willingly threw himself into the midst of all manner of privations. They daily took out a few pieces of copper from the leader's writing box to buy their necessaries," and they spent their time in prayer, study, meditation, religious conversations and other occupations suited to a missionary life.

Lecture on Jesus Christ.

In March, 1866, Keshab delivered his lecture on "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia." He described Christ's Mission to be to reform and regenerate mankind, and said, that "Christ was above ordinary humanity."

"Was not Jesus" he asked "an Asiatic? I rejoice, yea, I am proud—that I am an Asiatic. In fact, Christianity was founded and developed by Asiatics in Asia. When I reflect on this, my love for Jesus becomes a hundredfold intensified. I feel Him nearer my heart, and deeper in my national sympathies. Shall I not say, He is more akin and congenial to my Oriental nature, more agreeable to my Oriental habits of thought and feeling?......In Christ, we see not only the exaltedness of humanity, but also the grandeur of which Asiatic nature is capable. The more this fact is pondered, the less I hope will be the antipathy and hatred of European Christians against Oriental nationalities, and the greater the interest of the Asiatics in the teachings of Christ."

The lecture caused some misunderstanding and not a little misrepresentation as regards his relation to Christianity, to remove which he delivered five months later, his lecture on "Great men" in the Town Hall of Calcutta. In that lecture, he clearly defined his views with regard to Jesus Christ whom he classed with great men, men however who are above ordinary humanity. "It is true" said he "they are men; but who will deny they are above ordinary humanity? Though human, they are divine. This is the striking peculiarity of all great men. In them we see a strange and mysterious combination of the human and divine nature, of the earthly and heavenly."

Keshab at Monghyr.

In March, 1868, Keshab Chandra started on a missionary tour to the North-Western Provinces and Bombay, and after delivering various lectures on social and religious subjects returned to Monghyr. He stirred up the religious feeling of that ancient and picturesque little town to such an extent, that, "some proposed to

have seen supernatural sights concerning him; some connected him with Jesus as the elder and younger sons of the Father." Some prostrated before him, and called him "lord," "master" and "saviour."

Songs were sung about him, of which the following is an example :—

> "Awake, oh inmates of the neighbourhood, awake,
> There has come in your midst, a *yogi*, a lover of
> Brahma, full of tenderness;
> His throat always glorifies the name of Hari,
> And his heart is the abode of the perfect God."

The almost divine honours that were paid to Keshab at Monghyr provoked hostile comment. Not to speak of such men as Kabir and Chaitanya, many a man with far less pretensions to sanctity such as the founders of various sects mentioned in the last chapter, had before the time of Keshab, and have even since then, been looked upon as incarnations and paid divine honours. So there was nothing very unusual about such honours. Had Keshab wished to be a guru like Rám Saran Pal, the founder of the sect of Kartábhajás, or like Sivanáráyan Agnihotri, the founder of the Deva Samáj, he could easily have done so, and secured a numerically respectable following of half-educated and uneducated men and women. But the Bráhma Samáj consisted in 1868, as it still consists, chiefly of English-educated men, who would, in that case have ceased to recognise his leadership. When the charge of accepting divine worship was formally brought against Keshab, he explicitly denied that he had any claim to it. But a

few of the more enthusiastic among his followers still imputed to him claims which he himself did not recognise; and two Bráhmas, one of them a missionary of long standing, left him because he did not do so? It would be observed that, though Keshab denied his right to divine worship, he did not actively discourage it, on the ground, as stated by his biographer, "that he would be guilty of grave sin if he cruelly turned out any brother" for being so weak and credulous as to take him to be an incarnation.

The Samáj building

The Brahma Mandir, of which the foundation stone had been laid in January, 1868, was formally opened in August, 1869. "The building is established" Keshab said, "with the object of paying reverence to all truths that exist in the world. This temple is founded with the object that all quarrel, all misunderstanding, all pride of caste may be destroyed, and all brotherly feeling may be perpetuated. Those A´chāryas (ministers) who will give their precepts from the pulpit of this Mandir, should be looked upon by all as sinful men. They give precepts because being able to do so, they have been charged with that duty. The names and the language that are applied to God shall never be applied to any human being in this temple."

Keshab in England.

In February, 1870, Keshab started for England where he met with a warm welcome. A *soiree* was given in his honour by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

Keshab's public engagements became daily more and more numerous. He was every where received with cordiality.* Besides preaching from Baptist, Unitarian, and Congregationalist pulpits, he took part in the proceedings of various Societies, such as the Peace Society, the Ragged School Union, and the Female Suffrage Society. At a great Meeting held at St. James Hall, he defined his attitude, and that of the Bráhma Samáj towards Christ and Christianity. Speaking of the Bible he said he had found in it what had helped and nourished him. But Christianity, according to him, held a different language from that of Christ; it was split up into various sects, which placed salvation in various externalities and not in "Christ in the heart." On the 12th September, 1870, a farewell meeting was convened at the Hanover Square Rooms, at which no less than eleven denominations of Christians were represented. He had since his arrival in England spoken at upwards of seventy different public meetings to upwards of forty thousand people, and had created a very favourable impression about the Bráhma Samáj movements. On his return to India, Keshab busily engaged himself for several years in various social reforms.

* The *Punch* published the following lines :—

"Who among all living men
Is this Keshub Chunder Sen?
Is he big as a bull, or small as a wren,
This Keshub Chunder Sen."

Marriage of Keshab's eldest daughter.

In February, 1878, it was announced that Keshab's eldest daughter, not yet 14, was to be married to the Mahárájá of Kuch Behar, not yet 16. The announcement caused great sensation amongst the members of the Bráhma Samáj of India. They protested strongly. Their objections were: First the marriage was not to be celebrated in accordance with the Bráhma Marriage Act, which had been passed chiefly through his exertions, and which required the age of the bride to be at least 14 and that of the bride-groom at least 16; secondly, idolatrous ceremonies were, in all likelihood, to be introduced; thirdly, the Maharaja was not a member of the Bráhma Samáj, and should not marry the daughter of its leader.

In reply to such objections it was stated that the ceremony was not to be marriage, but only a formal betrothal, that the Mahárájá had declared himself a Bráhma, and that idolatrous rites would not be introduced. These assurances were made in perfect good faith. The principal Pandit of the Kuch Behar State who came to Calcutta to settle the details of the marriage ceremony agreed that there was to be a Bráhma Divine Service, and that a few essential Bráhma rites and a few Hindu rites but of a non-idolatrous nature were to be observed. The Pandit as well as the agent of the British Government who was administering the Kuch Behar State during the minority of its Mahárájá, agreed that neither the bride-groom nor the bride

was to take part in any idolatrous ceremony, and that no symbols of idolatry were to be kept at the place of marriage. The opponents of the marriage however, predicted that idolatrous ceremonies would be observed at the time of celebration; and their prediction turned out to be correct. Just two days before Keshab was to leave for Kuch Behar with his daughter and friends, he received a telegram from Kuch Behar, that Bráhma ceremonies would not be allowed at the marriage. Another message to the same effect came in the morning of the day on which the bridal party was to leave Calcutta. Notwithstanding these messages, however, the party left. *

* Even Keshab's friend and biographer admits, that he "did not act sagaciously here." He says, however, that "from the beginning Keshab had seen the hand of God in this affair." "The spontaneity of the Government offer" Keshub wrote after the marriage "and its wholly unexpected character, the prospect of influencing for good a large population, an entire Native State, mutual approval of the parties, the noble character of the Maharaja, all serve to confirm my conviction that the match was really providential." Whether providential or not, the match was certainly the immediate cause of the practical dissolution of the great organisation at which he had been labouring for nearly twenty years.

The line of defence adopted by Keshub was, that what he had done, he had done under inspiration from above. In an address delivered in January, 1879, he said:—

"Men have attempted to prove that I have been guided by my own imagination, reason, and intellect. Under this conviction they have from time to time protested against my proceedings. They should remember that to protest against the cause I uphold is to protest against the dispensations of God Almighty, the God of all Truth and Holiness."

"In doing this work, I am confident I have not done any thing that is wrong. I have ever tried to do the Lord's will, not

Arrived at Kuch Behar, Keshab strongly protested against the breach of the agreement which had been come to in Calcutta. A long controversy followed, but all the concession that Keshab could obtain from the Kuch Behar officials was, "that *the bride's party only* might take no part in idolatrous ceremonies." Keshab accepted this concession, and the marriage took place in essentially Hindu form.

Opposition to the marriage.

The opponents of the marriage now insisted upon calling a public meeting to remove Keshab from his position as secretary and minister of the Bráhma Samáj. A meeting of the congregation was accordingly called on the 21st March, 1878. The proceedings were very disorderly, almost riotous. Keshab's opponents went away with the idea that he had been formally deposed; his friends and adherents however, thought differently. The former, under the impression that Keshab had been constitutionally expelled, concerted a plan of going to the Brahma Mandir on the following Sunday and making themselves masters of it. Keshab and his friends, however, had anticipated them and posted a number of their adherents at the Mandir, who, as soon as the opponents appeared in view sent for the Police who drove them away. The assailants

mine. Surely I am not to blame for anything which I may have done under Heaven's injunction. Dare you impeach Heaven's Majesty? Would you have me reject God and Providence, and listen to your dictates in preference to His inspiration? Keshub Chunder Sen cannot do it, will not do it. I must do the Lord's will. Man's creed, man's counsel, I will not follow, but will trust and serve the Lord."

kept up the siege till late at night, when being repeatedly repulsed they retreated in despair. They started a rival prayer meeting; and on the 14th May convened a public meeting in the Town Hall to take steps for the establishment of a new Bráhma Samáj. The result of the meeting was the Sadhárán Bráhma Samáj.

Establishment of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj.

The secession of the great majority of the better educated members of the Bráhma Samáj left Keshab practically without any check on what he did and what he said. Those who remained with him were mostly his friends and adherents whose support he could always reckon upon. All but unfettered now, he struck out a path bolder than what he had followed hitherto. He had come into close contact with a great Hindu devotee, Paramhamsa Rámkrishna; and the contact had a powerful effect on him. Rámkrishna cherished the conception of God as mother with very great tenderness. His friendship and example "converted the Motherhood of God into a subject of special culture" with Keshab, whose attitude towards Hinduism was now completely changed. In 1880, Keshab thus wrote in the *Sunday Mirror* which was the organ of his Samáj at the time :—

Influence of Paramhamsa Rámkrishna.

"Hindu idolatry is not to be altogether overlooked or rejected. As we explained some time ago, it represents millions of broken fragments of God. Collect them together, and you get the indivisible Divinity. When the Hindus lost sight of their great God, they contented themselves with retaining particular aspects of Him, and representing them in human shapes or images. Their idolatry is nothing but the worship

of a Divine attribute materialized. If the material shape is given up, what remains is a beautiful allegory or picture of Heaven's dispensations. The Theist rejects the image, but he cannot dispense with the spirit of which that image is the form. The revival of the spirit, the destruction of the form, is the work of the New Dispensation. Cheer up, then, O Hindus, for the long lost Father from whom ye have for centuries strayed away, is coming back to you. The road is clear enough; it lies through your numerous Puranas and Epics. Never were we so struck with the divinity of the eclectic method as when we explored the gloomy regions of mythological India. The sermons now delivered in the Brahma Mandir are solely occupied with the precious truths discovered therein, and our own occupation is merely to gather the jewels as we go on. We have found out that every idol worshipped by the Hindu represents an attribute of God, and that each attribute is called by a particular name. The believer in the New Dispensation is required to worship God as the possessor of all those attributes, representedd by the Hindu as innumerable or 330 millions. To believe in an undivided deity without reference to those aspects of His nature, is to believe in an abstract God, and it would lead us to practical rationalism and infidelity. If we are to worship Him in all His manifestations, we shall name one attribute Saraswati, another Luckshmi, another Mahadeva, another Jagatdhatri, &c., and worship God each day under a new name, that is to say, in a new aspect." *

The New Dispensation.

In 1881, Keshab Chandra Sen announced the advent of the New Dispensation. The following extracts from Keshab's writings will elucidate the character of the new movement:—

"The New Dispensation is subjective. It aims at synthesis, and it aims at subjectivity. It endeavours to convert outward facts and characters into facts of consciousness. It believes that God is an ob-

* "Life of Keshub Chunder Sen" (1891), p. 215.

jective reality, an Infinite Person, the Supreme Father. In the same manner it believes in the objectivity of all prophets and departed spirits, each a person, each a child of God. But the recognition of the objective side of truth is not the whole philosophy of theology. There is a subjective side as well. This latter demands an equally faithful recognition; nay it ought to excite much warmer interest. For subjectivity is of the first importance to the wants of the soul. For who among us does not believe in the outward and objective God? And yet how few anong professing Theists realise Divinity in their own hearts? God is not only a Person, but also a character. As a person we worship him; His Divine character we must assimilate to our own character. True worship is not completed till the worshiper's nature is converted so as to partake of the nature of Divinity. Worship is fruitless if it does not make us heavenly and divine. The transfer of the outward Deity to subjective consciousness is the maturity of faith, the last fact of salvation. * * * *

In regard to the spirits of departed saints the same argument holds good; if you simply admit their entity, of what avail is it to you? You have no doubt heard of such a thing as the communion of saints. What is it? Is it the superficial doctrine of objective recognition, or is it the deeper philosophy of subjective fellowship? You must guard yourselves against the evils arising from the mere objective recognition of the world's prophets and saints. Nothing is so easy as to say, O Jesus, O Moses. This apprehension of the external reality of great spirits is not communion. There is Christ, here are we; and between us there is a great gulf. There is no attempt to bridge the gulf, and bring about closer relations. Hence is it that Jesus, though good and true, affects not our lives till we realise him within. The Christ of older theologies is the barren outward fact, the dead Christ of history and dogma. But the Christ of the New Dispensation is an indwelling power, a living spirit, a fact of consciousness. It is this philosophy of subjectivity which underlies the Pilgrimages to Saints, as they are called. We have been asked to explain what we mean by these pilgrimages. They are simply practical applications of this principle of subjectivity. As pilgrims we approach the great saints, and commune with them in spirit, killing the distance of time and space. We enter into them, and they enter into us. In our souls we cherish them, and

we imbibe their character and principles. We are above the popular error which materialises the spirits of departed saints, and clothes them again with the flesh and bones which they have for ever cast away. Nor do we hold these human spirits to be omnipresent. We do not say of them that they fill all space, and are here, there, and everywhere. We believe they still exist, but where they are we cannot tell. Wherever they may be, it is possible for us, earthly pilgrims, if we are only men of faith and prayer, to realise them in consciousness. If they are not personally present with us, they may be spiritually drawn into our life and character. They may be made to live and grow in us. . . . This is a normal psychological progress to which neither science nor theology can take exception. Here is the subject, mind, there is the object—a prophet or saint. The subject, by a mysterious though natural process, absorbs the object." *

In January, 1883, Keshab delivered an address on "Asia's Message to Europe," in which he said: "In

* "Life of Keshub Chunder Sen," p.p. 223-224.

With the New Dispensation several new practices were introduced of which one was called the New Dance. The following is a specimen of the songs accompanying it :—

"Chanting the name of Hari the saints dance.

Dances my *Gouranga* (Chaitanya) in the midst of devotees, drunk with the nectar of emotion, with tears of love on his eyes, Oh! how charming the sight.

Moses dances, Jesus dances, with hands uplifted, inebriated with love, and the great *rishi* Narad dances playing on the lyre.

The great *Yogi* Mahadev, dances with joy; with whom dances John with his disciples.

Nanak, Prahlad, and Nityanand all dance; and in their midst are Paul and Mahomed.

Behold! Hari, inebriated with his own love, dances in the company of his devotees and utters "Hari, Hari."

With the Lord Hari in the middle, the saints dance in a circle throwing their arms round each other's necks.

Hearing the glad tidings of the New Dispensation, dance both the heaven and earth and utter "Hari, Hari."

science there cannot be sects or divisions, schisms or enmities. Is there one astronomy for the East and another for the West? Is there an Asiatic optics as distinguished from European optics? Science is one; it is one yesterday, today, and for ever; the same in the East and the West. There can be but one science; it recognises neither caste nor colour nor nationality. It is God's science, the eternal verity of things. If God is one, His Church must be one."

Keshab's death.

In April, Keshab was ordered by his medical advisers to leave Calcutta for Simla. He returned to Calcutta about the end of October. for nearly a month and a half after his return, he showed signs of improvement; but as winter set in, he grew worse. His principal complaint was a severe pain about the loins, but every organ appeared to be diseased. In the last week of December it appeared in the *New Dispensation* paper, that "the minister had suffered another relapse, and the state of his health was critical." On the 8th January, 1884, Keshab breathed his last. His body was carefully washed, dressed in pure white silk, and wreathed with garlands of sweet scented flowers. After the body had been laid on the pyres, it was lighted by Keshab's eldest son. The ashes were preserved in an urn, and deposited a fortnight later, when the *sráddha* ceremony was performed. An obelisk of marble with the symbolic device of the New Dispensation (cross, crescent, trident, and Vedic Omkár) marks the spot.

Just as the decline of the A'di Samáj dates with the establishment of the Bráhma Samáj of India, so the decline of the latter dates with the establishment of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj. Keshab's genius and resolution, however, kept up his Samáj. The New Dispensation movement appeared even to give it a new start. Keshab left the Samáj in a fairly prosperous condition. At the end of 1883, five years after the schism, no less than fifty out of one hundred and seventy-three Bráhma Samájes adhered to the principles of the New Dispensation. The income of the Samáj for that year was about nineteen thousand rupees. *

The New Dispensation Church after Keshab's death.

But, Keshab's death hastened the downfall of his church. We have already seen, that when the Bráhma Samáj of India was founded, a number of young men, friends and adherents of Keshab formed into a body of missionaries. One of the most prominent among them, Pandit Bijay Krishna Goswami joined the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj in 1878. The rest were ordained Apostles of the New Dispensation in March, 1881. They formed what is called the Apostolical Durbár which was presided over by the minister. Just before Keshab's death the Durbár consisted of twenty two missionaries, the best known among whom was Protáp Chandra Mazumdár. He was Keshab's associate almost from his childhood. He was Assistant Secretary to the Bráhma Samáj, and acted as

Protáp Chandra Mazumdár.

* Report of the church of the New Dispensation up to December, 1883. Appendices A and B.

Secretary in Keshab's absence. When Keshab Chandra died, Protáp Chandra was away on a missionary tour in Europe and America. On his return, he found, that the Apostolic Durbár had passed the following resolution:

"We believe, that our Minister existed and shall ever exist in the bosom of God as the Minister of the New Dispensation. The relation we bear to him is not transient but everlasting. To preserve, demonstrate, and declare to the world the parmanent relation of the Minister of the New Dispensation, the President's seat in the Durbár. and his pulpit in the Sanctuary and Tabernacle shall remain vacant."

Protáp succeeded Keshab in the leadership of the New Dispensation. But the Apostolic Durbar disputed his claim to occupy the pulpit. The controversy continued for years. On one occasion in 1888, Protáp ventured to sit on the pulpit. The act was looked upon as sacrilege, and an attempt was made to drag him out forcibly. He sat until some order was restored, when he rose and proceeded to his house where he conducted the Divine Service. * The

The Vedi dispute.

* The following extract from an address delivered by Protáp Chandra Mozumdár in 1888 will show the extent to which the New Dispensation church was torn by dissensions at the time, dissentions which do not appear to have been settled yet:

"Every sect, every community, every church has its organisation. We in the Bráhmo Samaj have also tried to organise our movement, though, I am sorry to say, with no conspicuous success. The present condition of anarchy in our section of the Bráhmo Samáj at all events proves that my remark is well founded. The disgraceful party spirit,

Vedi question has now been settled by allowing the minister who conducts the service to sit upon it, but not on the carpet on which Keshab sat. The settlement, however is not considered final.

Quite recently (beginning of 1894) there have been further dissentions in the New Dispensation Samáj. Some of its influential missionaries and members have ceased attending the services held on Sunday evenings because they cannot have the minister of their choice, Bhái Gaurgovinda Ráya, in place of Bhái Trailokyanath Sányál, who has hitherto been acting as minister.

Recent dissentions.

In 1883, just before Keshab's death, the following were the organs of the New Dispensation Church:

Organs of the Samáj.

1. *The Dharma Tattva* (Bengali), a fortnightly journal devoted to the discussion of religious topics.

2. *The New Dispensation* (English).

3. *The Liberal* which had taken the place of the *Sunday Mirror*.

4. *The Sulabh Samáchára* (Bengali), a weekly pice paper, started for the education of the masses. It had at one time, a circulation of about 8000 copies. In 1883, its circulation is stated in the Bráhma Samáj Report for that year to have been two to three thousands.

ill-feeling, the quarrels, and scandals, the utter absence of authority in all affairs of importance, show unmistakably that we stand in sad necessity of some regular constitution to guide ourselves. What is it to be? is it to be unbridled democracy, the reckless despotism of one individual, or the irresponsible power of a prelacy? All these principles have at different times clamoured for mastery in the Bráhmo Samáj."

Since Keshab's death, the *Liberal* has been incorporated with the *The New Dispensation*, and the *Sulabh Samáchára* has ceased to exist. Protáp Chandra has started a monthly periodical of his own called the *Interpreter*.

The Sádháran Bráhma Samáj.

This Samáj was established on the 15th May, 1878 with the concurrence of 29 Provincial Samájes, and supported by the written declaration of 425 Bráhmas. The following are the conditions of the ordinary membership of the Samáj :—

Conditions of its membership ;

1. The applicant must be above eighteen years of age.

2. He must agree to sign the covenant of the Samáj containing the four principles of the Bráhma faith :

(1) *Its immediacy* or freedom from all doctrines of mediation or intercession.

(2) Its *independence* or freedom from the fetters of infallible books or men.

(3) Its *catholicity* or its broad sympathy for all truth wherever found, and its warm appreciation of the great and good of every land.

(4) Its *spirituality* or freedom from all external forms and ceremonies.

3. His private character must be pure and moral, for breach of morality in private life makes a member liable to forfeiture of membership.

4. He must agree to pay at least 8 annas in the year towards carrying on the work of the Samáj.

The following are the principles of the Samáj :

Its principles,

"(1) There is only one God, who is the Creator, Preserver and Saviour of this world. He is Spirit, infinite in power, wisdom, love, justice and holiness, omnipresent, eternal and blissful.

(2) The human soul is immortal, and capable of infinite progress, and is responsible to God for its doings.

(3) God must be worshipped in spirit and truth. Divine worship is necessary for attaining true felicity and salvation.

(4) Love to God, and carrying out His Will in all the concerns of life, constitute true worship.

(5) Prayer and dependence on God and a constant realization of His presence, are the means of attaining spiritual growth.

(6) No created object is to be worshipped as God, nor any person or book to be considered as infallible and the sole means of salvation, but truth is to be reverently accepted from all Scriptures and the teachings of all persons without distinction of creed or country.

(7) The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man and kindness to all living beings.

(8) God rewards virtue, and punishes sin. His punishments are remedial and not eternal.

(9) Cessation from sin, accompanied by sincere repentance, is the only atonement for it, and union with God in Wisdom, Goodness and Holiness is true salvation." *

* Annual Report of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj for 1891, p. 5.

The Government of the Samáj is vested in 5 officers who are elected annually viz. a President, Secretary, 2 assistant Secretaries and Treasurer and an executive committee also elected annually which, in 1891, consisted of 13 members. Missionaries are appointed by the executive committee whose instructions they follow as far as they can conscientiously do so. In 1891, there were four missionaries, viz. Pandit Sivanáth Sástri, and Babus Nogendra Nath Chatterji, Navadwip Chandra Das, and Sasibhusan Bose.

Its constitution.

The Prayer Hall of the Samáj was consecrated in January 1881. Almost immediately after its establishment, the Samáj issued a fortnightly Bengali journal called the *Tattva Kaumadi*. Its English organ the *Indian Messenger* was started in September, 1883.

Organs.

The Sádháran Bráhma Samáj has certainly more life than the other Samájes. The number of its members in 1891 was 1677, of whom 1539 were Bengalis, 41 Madrasis, 32 Khasias, 28 Mahrattas, 10 Nepalis, 10 Punjabis, 9 Assamese, 5 Uriyás, 2 Beharis, and 1 Mahomedan. In Northern India, including Bengal, Behar, Orissa, Assam, the North-west Provinces, the Punjab, Sindh, and Central India, there are 193 Bráhma and Prárthaná Samájes, of which the great majority are in sympathy with the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj. The Financial condition appears to be prosperous, the receipts in 1891 amounting to about Rs. 5000, and the disbursements to about Rs. 4362. *

Numerical strength and Finance.

* Annual Report of the Sádháran Bráhma Samáj for 1891.

But the recent secession of three of its prominent missionaries appears to some extent to have crippled the Samáj. Bijaykrishna Goswami was connected with it from its foundation.* He has now, however, severed all connection with the Samáj.

Recent secession of several missionaries.

Pandit Siva Náráyan Agnihotri was another zealous missionary. The following notice of his work is taken from the report of the Samáj for 1882-83:—†

"Pandit Siva Náráyan Agnihotri, who has recently given up his secular work, in order to be able to devote himself entirely to his mission work, had to spend the whole year at Lahore, only once visiting Rawul Pindi, during the vacation of his school. Yet he usefully employed his time, as usual, in propagating the principles of the Samáj in various ways. Besides conducting divine service as one of the ministers of the Local Samáj, he took part in several religious and social meetings, delivered public lectures on different subjects, and published a number of

* His work in 1882 is thus described in the annual report of the Samáj for that year.

" Pandit Bijay Krishna Goswami made Mission tours to different stations in the country, and preached Bráhmoism in the following places during the course of the year:—Rámpurhat, Burdwan, Jalpaiguri, Siliguri. Sirajgunge, Darjeeling, Saidpur, Pubna, Berhampur, Bánsbáriá, Rámpur Boáliá and Bágháchrá. Besides these missionary visits, he also ministered unto the spiritual wants of the Calcutta congregation, by regularly conducting the usual weekly service of our prayer Hall."

† Miss Collet's "Brahmo Year-Book" London, 1883.

books and papers, for the propagation of Theism." Siva Náráyan is now the Dev guru of a Samáj of his own called the Deva Samáj which has been noticed already. Another missionary, Pandit Rám Kumar Vidyáratna, who also was connected with the Samáj from its foundation, resigned in 1891.

Educational work 1891.

The educational work of the Samáj in 1891 was carried on through several institutions. The Bráhma Báliká Sikshálaya, the (Bráhma Girl's School) made fair progress, having on its rolls a monthly average of 73·5 pupils against 50.0 during the previous year. Besides the usual standards of study, lessons were given in music, drawing, needle-work and elementray science. The receipts of the School amounted to Rs. 2830, and the disbursements to Rs. 2226. A Boarding Institution for Bráhma girls was established. The Sunday Moral Training School, under the management of a mixed Committee of ladies and gentlemen, made good progress. There were 75 boys and girls on the roll, the average attendance being 55. Besides morality and religion, the pupils were instructed in music and elementary Science. The number of students on the roll of the Theological Institution, were 19 in the English, and 16 in the Bengali department. The Banga Mahilá Samáj (The Association of Bengali ladies) held 16 sittings during the year at which papers were read. The average attendance at the meetings was about 15, the number of members being 35.

In Southern India, there were in 1891, twenty one Bráhma and Prárthana Samájes. The oldest of these is the Southern India Bráhma Samáj. During Keshab Chandra Sen's visit to Madras in 1864, a monotheistic society under the name of the Veda Samáj was established. Its attitude was one of compromise towards Hinduism, as will appear from the third of its covenants given below :

Bráhmaism in Southern India.

The Veda Samáj.

1. I shall worship, through love of Him and the performance of the work He loveth, the Supreme Being, the Creator, the Preserver, the Destroyer, the Giver of Salvation, the Omniscient, the Omnipotent, the Blissful, the Good, the Formless, the One only without a second ; and none of the created objects, subject to the following conditions.

2. I shall labour to compose and gradually bring into practice a Ritual agreeable to the spirit of pure Theism, and free from the superstitions and absurdities which at present characterise Hindu ceremonies.

3. In the mean time I shall observe the ceremonies now in use, but only in cases where ceremonies are indispensable. as in marriages and funerals ; or where their omission will do more violence to the feelings of the Hindu community than is consistant with the proper interests of the Veda Somaj, as in *Sráddhas*. And I shall go through such ceremonies, where they are not conformable to pure Theism, as mere matters of routine, destitute of all religious significence—as the lifeless remains of a superstition which has passed away.

4. This sacrifice, and this only, shall I make to existing prejudices. But I shall never endeavour to deceive any one as to my religious opinions and never stoop to equivocation or hypocrisy, in order to avoid unpopularity.

5. I shall discard all sectarian views and animosities, and never offer any encouragement to them.

6. I shall as a first step gradually give up all distinctions, and amalgamate the different branches of the same caste.

7. Rigidly as I shall adhere to all these rules, I shall be perfectly

tolerant to the views of strangers, and never intentionally give offence to their feelings.

8. I shall never violate the duties and virtues of humanity, justice, veracity, temperance, and chastity.

9. I shall never hold, or attend, or pay for nautches, or otherwise hold out encouragement for prostitution.

10. I shall encourage and promote to the best of my power the re-marriage of widows, and discourage early marriages.

11. I shall never be guilty of bigamy or polygamy.

12. I shall grant my aid towards the issue, in the vernaculars of elementary prayer-books, and religious tracts; and also of a monthly journal, whose chief object shall be to improve the social and moral condition of the community.

13. I shall advance the cause of general and female education and enlightenment, and particularly in my own family circle.

14. I shall study the Sanskrit language and its literature (especially theological), and promote the cultivation of it by means not calculated to promote superstition.

About 1869, Sridharálu Naidu was appointed Secretary to the Veda Samaj. "He had not" says Miss Collet "the advantages of position and education which had been possessed by his predecessors, but he appears to have had a much stronger grasp of theistic principles, and not feeling satisfied with the half measure of a 'Veda Samáj,' he at length succeeded in converting the society into the Bráhma Samáj of Southern India." * The following covenants replaced the old ones of the Veda Samáj:—

Converted into the Bráhma Samaj of Southern India.

1. I will worship, through love of Him and the performance of the works He loveth, the Supreme Being, the Creator, the Preserver, the

* *The Modern Review*, January, 1884, quoted in "The Bráhma Samáj and other modern eclectic systems of religion of India" (Madras, 1890)

Giver of Salvation, the Omniscient, the Omnipotent, the Blissful, the Good, the formless the One only without a second, and none of the created objects.

2. I will look for Divine wisdom and instruction to the Book of Nature, and to that Intuition and Inspiration of God which give all men understanding. I do not consider any book or any man as the infallible guide in religion, but I do accept with respect and pleasure any truth contained in any book or uttered by any man without paying exclusive reverence to any.

3. I believe in the immortality and progressive state of the soul and in a state of conscious existence succeeding life in this world and supplementary to it.

4. I will daily direct my mind in prayer with devotion and love unto the Supreme Being.

5. I will endeavour strictly to adhere to the duties and virtues of humanity, justice, veracity, temperance, and chastity.

6. Believing as I do in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, I will discard all sectarian views and animosities, and never offer any encouragement to them.

7. Should I through folly commit sin, I will edeavour to be atoned unto God by earnest repentance and reformation.

8. Every year, and on the occasion of every happy domestic event of mine, I will bestow gifts upon the Southern India Bráhmo Samáj.

Sridharálu Naidu.

Sridharálu Naidu worked enthusiastically and unremittingly for the propagation of Bráhmoism in Southern India. He made missionary tours to Bangalore, Mangalore and various other places. He was a very poor man. But "he never complained, he never asked, he never even acquainted his friends in Calcutta with his circumstances. Alone he suffered, defended, prayed and worked, and God alone watched the deep trial and sorrows in the midst of which he lived." "At last" says Miss Collet "the end came. In January

1874, he went to visit some of his relatives at Pondicherry, near which town there was a temple—probably Chillambram—which he wished to see, in order to ascertain whether it would be suitable as a model for the "Brahmic Hall" which he wanted to erect in Madras. On this journey he was thrown out of a carriage, the horse having taken fright,—and terribly injured. He was taken to Pondicherry hospital, but no skill could save him, and after lingering for about twelve days he died, calm and faithful to the last. He left behind him a touching letter in English, headed, 'Memo: to friends in the last hour,' and signed 'K. Sridharálu, Pondicherry, the 15th January 1874.' In his letter, addressed to twelve friends, he requested them to take care of his family, and gave his advice on the affairs of his Church, which evidently lay very near his heart. It may be noted that while the funerals of the previous Madras Secretaries were conducted in regular Hindu style, with those idolatrous funeral rites which, even in their Veda Samaj Covenant, they had not the courage to renounce, Sridharálu Naidu distinctly wrote with his own hand;—'My funeral should be simple, with only Brahmic prayers.......I die a devoted Brahmo.' Thus closed one of the purest lives ever given to the service of God."

Work of the S. I. Bráhma Samáj 1892.

From the report of the Southern India Bráhma Samáj for 1892, we learn, that Divine Service was regularly conducted every Thursday and Sunday evening. Six new Members joined the Samáj during the year.

The prayers and sermons are stated in the Report to have been doing excellent service "in clearing and preparing the ground for the seeds of Theism." The Managing Committee, however, have to repeat "though not without keen regret, its old complaint that in this small Church of God there prevails such an appalling amount of spiritual indifference and practical irreligion that often a very serious doubt arises whether Theism has been correctly understood by not a few of those that style themselves Theists. Both within and without this Committee there is an urgent need of study, contemplation, prayer, purity, humility, and charity." Under the auspices of the Samáj a provincial Theistic conference was held in December 1892. The conference has strongly urged upon all the Samájes in the Madras Presidency the necessity of (1) issuing a Theistic Annual, (2) reviving and regularly publishing the *Fellow-Worker*, and (3) appointing and maintaing a missionary.

Monotheism in Western India.

There are in Western-India 164 Prárthaná Samájes, the oldest of which is the Prárthaná Samáj of Bombay founded in 1867. In 1882, it had 102 Members. The Puná Prárthaná Samáj established in 1870 also holds a prominent position in the Bombay Presidency.

The monotheists of Western India, at least the great majority of them, are what may be called monotheistic Neo-Hindus. Their position is somewhat like that of the members of the A'di Bráhma Samáj

of Calcutta. They have given up idolatry, but not caste, at least as regards marriage. In 1882, for instance, there was only one marriage in the Bombay Presidency in accordance with the Bráhma Marriage Act. But in Bengal, there were eleven such marriages.

END OF VOLUME I.

